

Troops kill 40 Kurdish rebels

DIYARBAKIR (AP) — Turkish troops have killed 40 Kurdish guerrillas in four separate clashes in the southeast, officials said Monday. The governor's office for the southeast region around Diyarbakir said 30 rebels were killed in fighting near the southeastern province of Siirt. Other rebels were killed in the provinces of Van, Hakkari and Diyarbakir. The governor's office did not say when the clashes took place. There was no way to verify the report from independent sources. One soldier was killed and five others were wounded in the operations, it said. The guerrillas have been fighting for autonomy in Turkey's southeast since 1984. The war has cost the lives of 28,000 people since then.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جورديان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الرأى

Japan, Egypt to build 'peace bridge'

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt and Japan on Monday sealed a deal to jointly finance and build a \$160-million "bridge of peace" over the Suez Canal, foreign ministry officials said. Osama Ashri, an assistant to the Egyptian foreign minister on Japanese affairs, told reporters that Egypt will pay \$60 million and Japan will provide the remaining \$100 million. He said Egypt would build the access to the bridge while Japan would build the 70-metre-high bridge. The agreement was concluded at the foreign ministry by Egypt's minister of state for planning and international cooperation, Zafer Bashri, and the Japanese charge d'affaires in Cairo, Mitsuo Sakaba. Japan also decided to grant Egypt about \$10 million "as a contribution to the execution of the project," the Japanese embassy said in a statement.

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Palestinians tear down at Israeli army barrier amidst new clashes

Combined agency dispatches

IN A TENSE showdown, Palestinian police took positions behind barricades Monday and turned their assault rifles on Israeli troops trying to quell a stone-throwing protest.

The incident began when several dozen Palestinians threw stones at Israeli soldiers guarding Rachel's tomb, an Israeli-controlled enclave in Palestinian-run town of Bethlehem.

Israeli soldiers fired rubber bullets and tear gas to disperse the stone-throwers and then started approaching the Palestinian-run area. As the troops got closer, Palestinian policemen began taking positions behind walls and barricades and turned their Kalashnikov assault rifles on the Israeli soldiers.

"It's on the edge. If they come closer, we will shoot," said one Palestinian policeman who would not give his name.

Israel reportedly fears that two masterminds of the bombing from Hamas are hiding in Bethlehem.

In a protest against the 26-day siege of Bethlehem earlier Monday, some 40 Palestinians tore down part of a road barrier of rocks and cinder blocks that had been set up by Israeli soldiers.

With chants of "God help us," the protesters, including priests in black robes, pushed the blocks, some the size of large TV sets. Others dug into mounds of earth with shovels, and children used their hands. About half an hour into the protest, the Palestinians brought a bulldozer for assistance.

At this point, Israeli troops who had only watched until then, climbed onto the barrier to prevent the bulldozer from tearing it down completely. An army commander issued orders over a loudspeaker that the protesters disperse. He was initially ignored, but the Palestinians eventually decided to withdraw, saying they would be back on Tuesday if the siege was not lifted by then.



A Palestinian businessman dressed in a suit (left) uses a shovel as another man throws a rock from an Israeli-made earth barricade blocking one of this town's exits Monday. Some 100 Palestinians, mainly elderly businessmen and some Christian and Muslim clergymen, demonstrated at this barricaded exit in protest against the continued Israeli-imposed closure in effect for the last four weeks (Reuters).

The clashes which left a Palestinian woman hospitalized, were also sparked by the demolishing of four Palestinian houses Monday, by Israeli soldiers.

The soldiers opened fire with tear gas and rubber

bullets at youths who pelted them with stones after two houses were torn down in Nablus village near the West Bank city of Bethlehem, witnesses said.

(Continued on page 7)

Mubarak and Arafat discuss faltering peace process

ALEXANDRIA (AFP) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat arrived here Monday and went straight into talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on the stalled peace process with Israel, officials said. "The two presidents are to examine the threats that weigh on the peace process and situation in the [Palestinian] territories because of the blockade imposed on them" by Israel, said Palestinian official Zohdi Kudra. The two will try to find viable proposals for renewing the peace negotiations that broke off in March after Israel began construction on a new Jewish settlement in Arab east Jerusalem, Palestinian officials said. In Gaza City, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke to Mr. Mubarak and His Majesty King Hussein Friday to get them to persuade Mr. Arafat to crack down on Islamist groups.

(Continued on page 7)

Haddadin says Jordan is building a modest dam, does not know of other Israeli plans

By Elias Zamaniri and agency dispatches

THE MINISTER of water and irrigation, Munther Haddadin, stressed yesterday that "Jordan has no knowledge of any Israeli plans or intentions to build a dam in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights or elsewhere" and that "we are not party to any Israeli designs to any (dam projects) that might touch on any occupied Arab territory."

"It's Jordan and not Israel which is building a diversion dam, which is a modest structure, on the Yarmouk River near Adasiyeh," the minister told the Jordan Times.

"The site of the dam, while it is on the border with Israel, is determined purely by geographical and topographical consideration. It in no way touches upon Syrian occupied territories or otherwise."

The minister was commenting on reports coming from Israel that Jordan has agreed to build the dam, which is intended to collect and divert water from the

Yarmouk River for Jordanian use, with Israel on land claimed by Israel.

"The site currently set for the dam on the Yarmouk River was agreed unequivocally with the Jordanians," Israel's water commissioner Meir Ben-Meir told Israel's Haaretz newspaper.

He said the project is set for the edge of what before the 1967 Middle East war was THE Al Himme enclave southeast of the Sea of Galilee, then a demilitarized zone between Israel and Syria on the southernmost slopes of the Golan Heights.

His comments echoed remarks made by Israeli officials. Mr. Ben-Meir said a Jordanian negotiator told Israeli counterparts during talks about the site: "You cannot demand this. It is not your land." But Mr. Ben-Meir said "these comments only fuelled Israeli politicians' insistence the dam be built at a site in the demilitarized zone."

He said that no political implications were involved in the decision to pick up a

new site for the dam saying that "only technical reasons" stood behind the decision. He confirmed, however, that only Jordanian money is used to cover the cost while Israel's role is restricted to archaeological rescue operations in the area.

Mr. Ben-Meir noted that Jordan "acted and continues to act in the preliminary construction drillings for the dam and has considerable interest in building the dam quickly so that work won't extend into the rainy season."

The Jordanian official news agency, Petra, on Saturday quoted an official source as saying that "Jordan will build the dam in Al Adasiyeh area between Jordanian and Israeli territories in order to divert its share of the Yarmouk waters to King Abdullah Canal, as agreed in the peace treaty between the Kingdom and Israel." The official source noted that only Jordanian money will be used to cover the cost of the project.

Last week, Israeli National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon had decid-

ed that the reservoir dam of the Yarmouk River at Adasiyeh would be constructed within the formerly demilitarized zone of Al Himme, an area disputed among Israel, Syria and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). The area was occupied by Israel in the 1967 war. The Palestinians say it was originally part of Mandatory Palestine but noted that any argument with Syria will never precede Israel's withdrawal from the site.

In so doing, Mr. Sharon changed the decision made by former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who resolved at the time that the dam would be constructed in territory that was not in contention. Before making his decision, Mr. Sharon consulted with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Apparently, the infrastructure minister received Mr. Netanyahu's support for the decision.

The assessment in Israel is that Rabin decided to remove the dam from the demilitarized zone so as to

(Continued on page 7)

U.S., Jordan sign debt rescheduling agreement

AMMAN (USIS) — Minister of Finance Suleiman Hafez and U.S. Ambassador to Jordan Wesley W. Egan yesterday signed an agreement rescheduling payments on about \$38.5 million in loans owed to the United States. The rescheduling is in accordance with the agreement reached on May 23 by the creditors of the Paris Club

to reschedule approximately \$400 million of Jordanian debt coming due between June 1, 1997 and February 28, 1999. As a result of the agreement with the United States, debt payments due during this period are postponed until October 2001.

This is the fourth such debt rescheduling agree-

ment between the United States and Jordan since 1989. Previous agreements were signed in October 1989, May 1992 and August 1994. In 1994 and 1995, the United States signed agreement with Jordan in which the government of the United States forgave nearly \$700 million in Jordanian debt to the United States.

The United States was a strong supporter of rescheduling Jordan's debt in the Paris Club deliberations in Paris last May. This agreement recognises the success Jordan has had in its monetary and fiscal policies and reflects the confidence of the U.S. in Jordan's ability to meet its debt obligations.

Israeli planes rocket south Beirut; Hizbollah explodes roadside bomb

BEIRUT (R) — Israeli planes fired rockets south of Beirut Monday and the Hizbollah movement said it exploded a roadside bomb in the latest wave of fighting in Lebanon.

Witnesses in the town of Na'ameh, 15 kilometres south of Beirut, said two planes fired a total of four rockets at suspected positions of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC).

A PFLP-GC official said the raids caused damage but no casualties.

"There were only financial losses from the two raids. But the Israeli planes are still in the area so we are delaying any

final statement on casualties," he said.

In Jerusalem, an army spokesman said, "Israeli air force planes attacked terrorist targets at Na'ameh, south of Beirut. Pilots reported accurate hits. All planes returned safely to base."

The PFLP-GC, which rejects any peace negotiations with Israel, holds hilltop bases in the Na'ameh area, where Israeli planes occasionally unleash rocket attacks.

Earlier, South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia sources said one of their militiamen was wounded in a bomb blast in Israel's 15-kilometre deep south Lebanon occupation zone.

A Hizbollah statement said, "a group from the Islamic Resistance detonated a roadside bomb against an SLA patrol in Bint Jbeil, killing and wounding all its members."

The latest violence to rattle south Lebanon served as a reminder that efforts to secure peace in the Middle East are threatened on many fronts.

Monday's roadside bomb attack took place hours after Hizbollah fired rocket-propelled grenades and machine guns at Israeli forces in the south. Security sources in Israel said there were no casualties or damage in that attack.

The assault triggered shelling from inside the occupation zone which hit apartment buildings in the southern city of Nabatieh, security sources said.

Pro-Israeli militia sources said tanks in the zone fired at suspected Hizbollah positions around Nabatieh. The security sources did not report casualties from the 20 shells.

The violence followed battles last week which killed 10 civilians, three Hizbollah fighters and one Israeli-backed militiaman — the bloodiest fighting since an April 1996 ceasefire understanding barring attacks on civilians.

Ross plans no trips to Mideast — Rubin

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. special Middle East envoy Dennis Ross has no fixed plans to visit the region and may go only as part of a visit by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, the State Department spokesman said on Monday.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Monday that Mr. Ross intended to visit to follow up on Palestinian promises to improve security ties with Israel.

But the spokesman, James Rubin, said, "Dennis Ross has made no decision to travel to the region, so that is not correct. He will make a decision about his travel in the context of the secretary's decision about her travel."

"I can only say that Ambassador Ross will surely accompany Secretary Albright on her trip so I expect he will definitely be visiting the region very soon. Whether he takes additional travel before, during or after will be determined in the context of her decision as to when to travel."

Mr. Rubin also denied Middle East media reports that Ms. Albright had decided to put off her trip to the region, her first since she took over as Secretary of State early this year.

"Albright does intend to travel to the region very soon, most likely in September. There has been no change in her plans," he said.

"The prospects for advancing the peace process on that trip would be advanced if the Palestinian [National] Authority were in a position to provide additional information [on security matters]... so that the focus would not be on security, but the focus could be on restoring the trust and confidence that has been so unfortunately lost," he added.

Primary and backup oxygen generators fail on Mir station. Cosmonauts have 2 days oxygen left

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida (AP) — The three men aboard Russia's Mir space station lost use of both their primary and backup oxygen generators on Monday, a potentially serious problem, NASA said.

The men were attempting to repair the system when last heard from, said spokesman Ed Campion, and will be back in position to communicate with earth early Tuesday. But even if both still are broken, Mir has enough oxygen to last at least a couple of days, he said.

"If you can't get either of the two systems back up, then you're facing a serious situation," said Mr. Campion, speaking by telephone from the Johnson Space Centre in Houston.

Russian flight controllers do not know the present status aboard Mir because the two Russian cosmonauts

and one American astronaut were trying to fix the failed solid fuel-burning system when they had their last communication pass of the day, Mr. Campion said.

Neither Russian nor U.S. space officials will find out whether the system is still broken until early Tuesday. The primary elektron generator was not working, it began overheating and shut itself down today, Mr. Campion said.

"It could be that tomorrow it could be no problem, or it could be a fairly significant problem," Mr. Campion said.

NASA astronaut Michael Foale and his Russian crewmates have had repeated problems with this new elektron generator, carried up by space shuttle Atlantis in May. But this is the first time since February that a crew has had serious trouble with the backup system, in

which solid-fuel canisters are ignited to produce oxygen.

One of these canisters burst into flames in February, filling the station with smoke and almost causing the crew to abandon ship.

The cosmonauts were trying to ignite a canister today when the system failed — nothing seemed to work. The trouble could be with the canister itself or with the device in which it's placed, Mr. Campion said. Fortunately, Mir has spare parts on board for this igniting device, he said.

Russian flight controllers ordered the crew to turn on the elektron, which had been turned off to conserve power since last week. But it shut itself down, likely because it was overheating, Mr. Campion said. And the crew was left, at least temporarily, with no means to produce oxygen.



An injured Algerian woman is transported on a wheelchair at Algiers hospital after a bomb attack in a crowded market in the Al Biar residential district of Algiers around 11 a.m. Monday. At least four people were killed and 49 injured (AFP photo)

Sudan rebels attack in Nuba mountains

ADDIS ABABA (AFP) — The rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) on Monday announced that it had begun an assault in the central Nuba mountain region, killing 30 government soldiers and taking a garrison.

"For the first time in three years, the forces of the SPLA in the Nuba mountains started an offensive in the west ... and captured the strategic NIF garrison.

Magda, a week ago," SPLA spokesman Yasser Arman said.

Mr. Arman, speaking by telephone from the Eritrean capital Asmara, said that 30 soldiers of the government backed by the National Islamic Front (NIF) had been killed and many others wounded.

The rebels — who have been fighting for 14 years to free mainly animist and Christian south Sudan from

domination by the Muslim and Arabised north — also captured mortars and armoured vehicles, he added.

The latest rebel claim came as South African President Nelson Mandela was hoping on Tuesday to meet SPLA leader Colonel John Garang as part of a bid to promote peace with the Khartoum junta of General Omar Al Bashir, to whom a number of breakaway rebel

factions have rallied.

South African presidential spokesman Parks Mankahlala said Mr. Mandela planned to meet Col. Garang with a view to facilitating talks between the SPLA leader and General Bashir, but a rebel spokesman last week indicated that any hint of a meeting between the Sudanese rivals was "first circulated by Khartoum to the utter amazement" of the

Iran wants extradition of banker arrested in France

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran's judicial authorities are urging France to extradite an Iranian banker arrested by French police on corruption charges, the press here reported Monday.

Hedayat Ashtari-Laraki, head of the French branch of the Iranian bank Sepah, is suspected of embezzling up to \$12.5 million.

The managing director of the bank, Valiollah Seif, said Tehran was doing everything it could to bring about Ashtari-Laraki's extradition.

"A team of Iranian lawyers and inspectors has been present during the French police's interrogation" of Ashtari-Laraki, he said.

But Mr. Seif said that French police plan to put the banker on trial in France because that is where he has committed his crimes, and that he has already made one court appearance before a French judge.

Ashtari-Laraki has been wanted for two years for embezzlement.

Egyptian ministry informed North Korean envoy missing

CAIRO (AFP) — The Egyptian Foreign Ministry said Monday that it had been informed by the North Korean embassy here that the North Korean ambassador to Egypt was missing.

"We were informed about the disappearance of the ambassador by the North Korean embassy 12 hours after he left his residence Friday afternoon," said Said Ragab, a foreign ministry official responsible for Asian affairs.

In Seoul, South Korean Foreign Ministry officials said the ambassador, Jang Sung-Gil, and his actress wife were trying to defect to a third country.

Yonhap Television News in

Seoul, quoting an unnamed senior foreign ministry official, said that Mr. Jang, his wife, and his Paris-based elder brother and two children had "already arrived" in the United States.

Mr. Ragab said the "concerned Egyptian authorities" were immediately informed about the ambassador's disappearance and "if he has left Egypt already he could only have done it under a false identity."

"We first checked around with hospitals to see whether he had had an accident but did not find him," Mr. Ragab said.

A North Korean diplomat here Monday denied the reports the ambassador had defected and said he was "in

the embassy."

"The ambassador is in the embassy," said the North Korean diplomat contacted by AFP by telephone. Asked if he could be reached, the diplomat, who refused to reveal his identity, said "he is very busy."

North Korean embassy security guards here also reportedly saw several journalists Monday looking into the reported defection, witnesses said.

The family in Paris, identified by Yonhap as Mr. Jang's older brother, his wife, son and daughter, reportedly disappeared from their residence on the same day, Friday, that Mr. Jang was reported missing in Cairo.

Iran's new foreign minister calls for expanded ties with Cuba

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran's new foreign minister, Kalam Kharazi, called Monday for expanded ties with Cuba, which has already signed several cooperation accords with the Islamic republic.

"Relations between the two countries are good but they could develop further," Mr. Kharazi said during a meeting with Cuba's new ambassador to Tehran, Dario Orta Turante, the Islamic Republic News Agency reported.

Mr. Kharazi, who became

foreign minister last week under Iran's new president, moderate cleric Mohammad Khatami, also urged an increase in official visits between Cuba and Iran.

The new Cuban ambassador said that his government also wanted to develop relations with Iran, adding that two Cuban political and economic delegations would soon visit Tehran.

Havana and Tehran signed a cooperation accord which includes Cuban participation

in the construction of Iranian oil and sugar refineries, along with the sale of pharmaceuticals and the sending of Cuban medical personnel to Tehran.

Trade between the two countries stands at only \$20 million a year. Cuba and Iran share a common foreign policy tenet in their opposition to what they describe as the hegemonic policies of the U.S., which has tried to internationally isolate the two countries. Iran opened relations with Cuba after the 1979 Islamic revolution.



BETHLEHEM ROADBLOCK: Israeli soldiers on Monday prevent Palestinian protesters from removing a road block put up by the Israeli army at the eastern entrance of Bethlehem. Soldiers stopped the group of protesters who also brought a bulldozer to remove the barrier. Israel sealed off Bethlehem and other Palestinian cities on the West Bank as part of the sanctions imposed after a double suicide bombing in Jerusalem on July 30 (AFP photo)

Relatives visit jailed British nurses in Riyadh ahead of awaited verdict

RIYADH (AFP) — Relatives of two British nurses accused of killing an Australian colleague visited the women in prison in Saudi Arabia ahead of an anxiously awaited verdict, a British diplomat said Monday.

The families arrived last night, and they met the nurses this morning, said the diplomat, who requested anonymity.

Deborah Parry's sister and brother-in-law, Sandra and Johnathan Ashbee, and Lucille McLaughlan's mother went to the jail in the city of Dammam where the nurses

have been imprisoned since December, the official said.

Their visit comes at a crucial time as a Saudi court is expected to pass any day its verdict on the two nurses, charged with the murder of 55-year-old Yvonne Gifford at the King Fahd hospital in Dammam, near Dammam, on December 11.

British diplomats said last week that the Islamic court of Khobar, near Dammam, would deliver its verdict within days. The Saudi authorities had yet to respond to a request that the women be moved to a better prison.

Kuwaiti police investigate beating of S. Lankan maids

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwaiti police are investigating the case of three Sri Lankan maids who sought shelter at their embassy here after complaining that they were beaten by their employer, an official said Monday.

The three maids, all in their 20s, fled to the embassy last week complaining of "torture" and "inhuman treatment" by their employer, a Sri Lankan embassy official said, asking not to be named.

"The Kuwaiti sponsor and his wife denied" ill-treating the maids, the official said, but added that "according to the medical certificates and the maids' evidence we are going to proceed" with legal action.

The case has been reported to the police and the results of the investigation will then be presented to the public prosecution.

The maids, who the official named as G.P. Sandaya, K.M.A. Maneke and K.A.S. Nawakkara, told a local newspaper last Thursday that they had been beaten and burnt by their employer, with whom they had a two-year contract.

The official said about 300 maids are now sheltering in the embassy, but 80 or 90 per cent of their complaints concern non-payment of wages, which the embassy tries to settle directly with the employers.

The official said there are about 10 maids who have complained about being beaten, but none as seriously as the three latest victims.

Some 107,000 Sri Lankans live in Kuwait, most of them working as domestic servants who can expect to receive monthly salaries of about \$115 to \$130.

Turkish-Cypriot leader warns of war in Cyprus

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş said Monday that a new war could erupt on the divided eastern Mediterranean island if the Greek Cypriots are allowed to join the European Union (EU).

"The membership of the Greek Cypriots to the EU under the title of the Government of Cyprus will strip the Turkish Cypriots

of their rights. "And the remedy to this is a war," Mr. Denktaş told reporters in Nicosia's Turkish-held sector, according to the Turkish-Cypriot news agency TAK.

Mr. Denktaş also said he saw no point in continuing U.N.-sponsored intercommunal reunification talks with Cyprus President Glafcos Clerides, a Greek Cypriot.

'Window of opportunity' seen for Palestinian media

By George S. Hishmeh
USIA

WASHINGTON — There is a "window of opportunity" to create an independent media in the Palestinian-run areas of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, according to prominent Palestinian journalist Daoud Kuttab.

"We have a chance," he told an audience of U.S. government officials, journalists and writers and human rights activists at the Centre of Policy Analysis on Palestine earlier this week.

Mr. Kuttab is director of the Institute of Modern Media at Al Quds University, an educational television station, which may be also described as a Palestinian version of the American television network, C-SPAN. It concentrates on broadcasting sessions of the Palestinian legislature or other

seminars or lectures of general public interest in the West Bank or the Gaza Strip.

Mr. Kuttab gained international attention when he was briefly jailed earlier this year for broadcasting unedited television coverage of the deliberations of the fledgling Palestinian Legislative Council, which is sometimes critical of Palestinian Authority (PA) chairman Yasser Arafat.

His problems with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) began when he found out that his non-stop coverage of the legislative sessions were being jammed by the PNA-controlled Voice of Palestine television station. When Mr. Kuttab resorted to distributing his coverage on television cassettes to other local television stations, he was arrested by the Palestinian police.

As a result of his arrest and the

subsequent international outcry, the PNA formed a commission under Information Minister Yasser Abed Rabbo to draft legislation on press freedoms. The commission includes representatives from the media and public interest groups but there has been no indication yet when the commission will come up with the new legislation.

Mr. Kuttab reported that there have been "mixed signals" from the PNA since 1995 when the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) assumed control in the two territories occupied by Israel in 1967. He noted that although there has never been any censorship, several journalists have been arrested and newspapers and publications confiscated.

On the other hand, he said, new publications have been launched and the Palestinian areas now

have private radio and television stations. The only Arab state with private electronic media is Lebanon. He attributed this proliferation, in part, to fears within the Palestinian leadership that Israel may one day decide to obstruct official television and radio stations should peace negotiations falter further.

Mr. Kuttab quoted Iyad Serraj, the Palestinian commissioner for citizens rights, as saying that there has been a significant decrease this year in human rights violations by the PNA.

He gave credit to Mr. Abed Rabbo for the growth of local radio and television stations in the different cities where the PNA has full control, adding that local politicians have found the local television station "an important outlet" for their aspirations.

There are 19 private television

stations and four radio stations in the West Bank cities but none in Gaza. He described their political orientation as "centrist" although there may be evidence of some favoritism toward one political group or another.

According to Mr. Kuttab, the mushrooming of local television and radio stations has given rise to popular "call-in" shows which local politicians clamour to appear on.

He also said his station's coverage of the legislature has prompted local newspapers to increase coverage of these deliberations.

Mr. Kuttab indicated that he was grateful for the support of U.S. Consul General Edmund Abington during his incarceration. "He came and saw me on the third day,"

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:00 Square One TV
15:30 Dog House
15:35 French Programmes
16:00 Album Show
16:10 French Programmes
19:00 News in French
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Coach
20:00 Tilt
20:30 Encounter
21:10 Doc. — Nature of Things
22:00 News in English
22:30 West Beach
23:15 Mini-series

PRAYER TIMES

04:40 Fajr
06:02 (Sunrise) Duha
12:37 Dhuhr
16:15 Asr
19:13 Maghreb
20:35 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweilich, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church
Tel. 632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel.
661757.

Terra Sancta Church Tel.
622366

Anglican Church Tel. 652826.

Armenian Catholic Church
Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church
Tel. 775261.

St. Ephraim Church Tel.
771751.

Arman International Church
Tel. 5516245.

Evangelical Lutheran Church
Tel. 824328.

German-speaking Evangelical
Congregation Tel. 688404

The Latter-Day Saints Tel.
654932.

Church of Nazareth Tel.
675691.

The Evangelical Local Church
in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking
Latin Catholics Parish Tel.
614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department
of Meteorology
Fine weather conditions will
prevail with temperatures lower
than average by 3-5 degrees
centigrade and winds northwesterly
moderate to active. In
Aqaba, winds will be northerly

moderate and seas calm.

Amman 17/27

Aqaba 23/35

Deserts 16/31

Jordan Valley 22/35

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 28, Aqaba 35 Humidity
readings: Amman 48 per
cent, Aqaba 32 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Yousef Rashid 875792

Dr. Khalil Jhali 740740

Dr. Walid Al Masri 675485

Dr. Jum'a Abu Dhiab 758848

Ferdows pharmacy 778336

Al Asema pharmacy 637055

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

Nairoukh pharmacy 623672

Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Ahmad Qam 281484

AI Quds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:
Dr. Walid Halaseh 982799

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Dept 661111

Civil Defence Immediate Resc
..... 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 621111,
637777

Fire Brigade 617101

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Department
..... 630321

Hotel Complaints 605800

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage Com
plaints 897467

Amman Municipality Com
plaints 787111

Telephone Information (direc
tory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone
Repairs 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs
661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority
..... 815615

Electric Power Company
636381

RJ Flight Information
0853200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-
53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre
813813/32

Khalidi Maternity 642481/6

Akileh Maternity 642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity
..... 642362

Malhas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 607071

Shmeisani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646

Italian, Al-Mutajireen 777101/3

Al-Bashir 775111/26

Army, Marka 891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital
602240/50

Amal Hospital 674155

The Arab Centre for Heart
and Special Surgery 865199

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)83323

Zarqa National Hospital

(09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)86732

Al Hikma Modern Hospital
(09)909900

IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital
(02)275555

Greek Catholic Hospital
(02)272275

Ibn Al Nafes Hospital
(02)247100

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA
AIRPORT
ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

08:05 Sanaa (RJ)

08:20 Damascus (RJ)

10:15 Abu Dhabi, Al 'Ain (RJ)

10:25 Beirut (RJ)

10:40 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)

10:45 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)

17:30 London (RJ)

17:40 Frankfurt (RJ)

17:40 New York, Amsterdam
(RJ)

19:30 Cairo (RJ)

01:00 Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)

01:30 Madrid (RJ)

05:00 Dubai (add) (RJ)

06:50 Abu Dhabi (add) (RJ)

Other Flights
09:00 Cairo (MS)

13:00 Riyadh (SV)

14:30 Dubai (EK)

16:40 Istanbul (TK)

18:05 Kiev (6U)

21:30 Tel Aviv (LY)

22:50 Aden (Y)

23:35 Larnaca (CY)

23:45 Amsterdam (KL)

00:55 Bucharest (RO)



GRADUATION: His Majesty King Hussein Monday congratulates sharpshooters following a target practice at the Royal Guard's Hamzeh Ben Abdul Mutaleb Brigade. The King attended the graduation ceremony of army officers at the brigade compound and observed several exercises including taekwondo, judo, and other martial arts performances. He later distributed awards to the graduates. Monday's events were attended by several members of the Royal family members, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, and high-ranking army officers (Jordan Armed Forces photo).

Amman's first woman taxi driver steers her course

By Nadia Mukhlis
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The first female taxi driver in Jordan is a 52-year-old widow, supporting a family of five children and 19 grandchildren. Muayassar Abu Hawa is a Jordanian citizen who lived a comfortable life until her husband's death. Suddenly she was faced with unexpected difficulties. Forced to earn an income, Ms. Abu Hawa became a taxi driver after holding several positions, including a private teacher, a freelance writer, and an assistant in an advertising company.

She obtained a public vehicle driving licence in 1992, in order to work as a driving trainer, which she subsequently never did, because "they never found my name in the traffic register book," she told the Jordan Times.

"I asked a taxi driver to lease his car [to] me for JD 20 a day," she said.

"The driver did not believe me at first and after I showed him my driver's licence he agreed to take me for a driving test and was amazed by my driving proficiency and accepted my request," she said.

After Ms. Abu Hawa's story hit the press, leading to 33 interviews, the proprietor of the car decided to elevate the rental fee to JD 25 per day, to which Ms. Abu Hawa replied by giving the car keys back to the owner.

She then went to another taxi company, which agreed to lease a car for JD 17 a day, on the condition that she work from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily.

At this point she faced other problems. Elderly men started to object, saying that driving is a man's job and that "there



Muayassar Abu Hawa stands by her taxi on her 12-hour shift (Petra photo)

are too many young men without jobs, and it wasn't fair for women to take up their job opportunities," Ms. Abu Hawa said.

After quitting her second job, she was contacted by a third taxi company that agreed to lease her a car, which she has been driving for three months now.

"The owner [agreed] to give me the car with a lease of JD 15 a day on the condition that I cover all car repair expenses which come up to JD 5 a day, noting that the usual car lease is between JD 20-22 a day," she said.

"I work from 7:30 a.m. until late at night to cover all my responsibilities which are becoming a burden on my shoulders," she went on.

"I pay JD 20 a day to the car owner and around JD13 a day for gas which leaves me with a two to four dinar profit a day and sometimes

less," she said. Ms. Abu Hawa hopes to own a private car, which can be acquired only if a company agrees to give her a registered name for her automobile.

"If I can get this approval, I can buy a new car from any agency exempted from custom duties and pay monthly payments for a car that will be my own in the end," she said.

"They should grant me my demand as an exceptional case, being the only woman taxi driver in Jordan," she told the Jordan Times.

As to how people react when they find out that their driver is a woman, she said that she has never been exposed to offensive treatment from passengers and that Jordanian citizens are very generous and kind.

They respect that she is responsible for a family, and is working at an "hon-

ourable job" to afford an appropriate living, she continued.

"One man in Irbid sent me a mobile phone and JD 200 in a closed envelope signed 'from a benefactor'," Ms. Abu Hawa said.

Similar stories of goodwill have come across Ms. Abu Hawa's path.

"One day I took a few women from Juwaidah to Zarqa and back again and they refused to let me go without having lunch with them and gave me JD 20, perfume, and wrist watch as a gift," she said.

"I chose this field of work and I am proud of it and will continue working in it; my only wish is if I could get my own car so that the work I achieve is spent on a car I own."

"My job is a proof that women can work honourably in any field and succeed in their jobs just as good as men," she said.

Majali, NPC discuss election issues

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday expressed the government's readiness to engage in dialogue with all groups and political parties and to listen to views that are in the nation's interest.

Dr. Majali spoke at a meeting with representatives of the National Constitutional Party (NCP), led by its Secretary General Abdul Hadi Majali, and was accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister for Services and Minister of Administrative Development Abdullah Ensour.

The prime minister exchanged views with the NCP delegation concerning the upcoming parliamentary elections and means of ensuring their success, according to NCP spokesperson Hakam Kheir.

Describing the meeting as productive, Mr. Kheir said the two sides also discussed the NCP's proposals concerning the elections, and stressed that the NCP will take part in the upcoming elections, which they consider a sacred national duty that will further the democratic process in the country.

Expressing the NCP's conviction that the elections will be fair and free, Mr. Kheir explained that his party, with the government, plans to open a dialogue with the other political parties next week to determine an appropriate



Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday meets in his office with representatives of the National Constitutional Party (NCP), led by its Secretary General Abdul Hadi Majali (Petra photo)

mechanism for the elections, adding that transparency is a basic requirement for parliamentary and democratic life.

"We are looking forward to electing a parliament that truly represents various shades of political views and the whole political spectrum," according to Mr. Kheir.

The NCP, formed from the merger of nine parties in May, encourages all citizens to take part in the elections as a national duty, he continued.

The prime minister

briefed the NCP delegation on the outcome of the dialogue sessions held so far between the government and the Islamic Action Front and the Muslim Brotherhood movement, two parties which have already declared their intention of boycotting the elections, he said.

"We have found that the government has good intentions and [is] ready to be open and receive all views," Mr. Kheir added.

The NCP is maintaining contacts with the opposition parties in order to

reach a general consensus over the best solutions to current political issues, he concluded.

The Majali-NCP meeting came on the heels of a meeting Sunday between the prime minister and the leaders of five opposition parties which intend to participate in the Nov. 4 elections.

The government intends to hold another dialogue session with the pro-boycott parties next week, according to Minister of State for Information Affairs Samir Mutawi.

JTAA seeks to boost tourism

IRBID (Petra) — The Jordan Travel Agents Association (JTAA) Monday urged all travel and tourist offices operating in Jordan to work out comprehensive and joint programmes in their respective areas to increase the number of Jordanian and foreign visitors to archaeological sites.

JTAA spokesperson Lam'i Haddadin made the appeal at a meeting held in the northern city of Irbid with representatives of travel agencies, hotels, and other tourism industry organisations.

"The time has come for the private sector to assume its role and shoulder its duty in this respect through helping Jordanians learn about their country's archaeological treasures and to orient them on the importance of tourism," he said.

The association is cooperating closely with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in drawing up legislation and regulations guaranteed to stimulate the tourism industry, he added.

The JTAA plans to conduct a tour of the archaeological sites in northern Jordan for representatives of the travel and tourist offices there to examine the nature and the standards of services offered to visitors, he explained.

Next month, the JTAA plans to invite heads of various tourism-related organisations for a general meeting to discuss the possibility of holding a national conference to design a comprehensive tourism strategy for Jordan, Mr. Haddadin related.

In order to secure sufficient capital for marketing Jordan at home and abroad, the travel and tourist offices could merge in order to better compete against foreign tourism firms and operate successful tourist programmes, Mr. Haddadin suggested.

Outlining JTAA's programmes to his audience, he said the association was ready to organise training courses for the travel and tourist offices personnel.

Representatives of the tourist and travel agencies in Irbid Governorate presented their demands, including new legislation to stimulate the tourism industry, and requested that their agencies be allowed to own and operate tourist transport vehicles to facilitate group trips.

They also demanded that these agencies be allowed to set up their own resthouses and restaurants at archaeological sites in order to offer better services to tourists.



Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday meets with Lower House of Parliament Speaker Sa'd Hayel Srour to discuss the upcoming Nov. 4 general elections. The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister for Services and Minister of Administrative Development Abdullah Ensour (Petra photo)

Srour urges participation in elections

AMMAN (Petra) — Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Saad Hayel Srour Monday issued an appeal to the political parties that declared their intention to boycott the 1997 general elections to reconsider their position and participate in the democratic process.

After a meeting with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and Deputy Prime Minister for Services and Minister of Administrative Development Abdullah Ensour, Mr. Srour disclosed that he had held meetings with political parties, including the Islamic Action Front (IAF), as well as the

Muslim Brotherhood movement, in order to encourage their members against boycotting the elections.

"I reiterate my call on the Muslim Brotherhood and the IAF, as well as the other political groups, to join hands in promoting the democratic process through participation in the coming elections on Nov. 4," Mr. Srour said.

Referring to the meeting with Dr. Majali, he said discussion covered preparations for the parliamentary elections and the outcome of the dialogue sessions which Dr. Majali has held with the heads of political groups.

The prime minister renewed the government's call for all citizens to exercise their constitutional rights to run for Parliament and vote in the upcoming elections, and said the government welcomes dialogue with all groups and parties bound to safeguard the national interest, he continued.

Mr. Srour urged all eligible citizens to vote so that the new Parliament can assume its role by addressing various problems and render decisions by the principle of majority vote, which should be respected by the minority.

Several hospitals to merge — Kurdi

MADABA (Petra) — The Ministry of Health plans to merge several neighbouring health centres in order to raise the standard of their services and cut expenses, Minister of Health and Medical Care Ashraf Kurdi announced Monday.

During a tour of hospitals and health centres in Madaba Governorate and the Thibban district, Dr. Kurdi said the ministry is in the process of appraising the conditions and the level of service of the comprehensive and primary health care centres prior to the proposed mergers.

The ministry is keen on providing the best health service to the public through government-run hospitals

and health centres, the minister said.

The proposed measures will be taken after consultation with the heads of health departments in the various governorates, he added.

In order to improve the standard of medical services, the ministry has plans to despatch doctors, specialists, nurses, and other cadres abroad to acquire more skill and efficiency, he explained.

During the tour, the minister was briefed by Madaba Governor Abdul Karim Malahmeh about the general health situation in the governorate, including advancement of the Thibban health centre, extension of evening office hours at the pharmacy of the Nadim Government

Hospital, and provision of sufficient medicines.

While inspecting the Nadim Hospital, the minister met with doctors, heard their requests and views, and promised to find solutions to the problems discussed.

He also promised sufficient medical appliances and drugs and to strengthen the dialysis unit.

Dr. Kurdi stated that the ministry in October will announce a tender for a hospital to be built in Thibban, adding that an initial sum of JD 300,000 has been allocated for the project.

The minister visited other medical centres in the region.

WHAT'S GOING ON

DARAT AL FUNUN SUMMER '97 FESTIVAL

* Opening of the Summer '97 Festival, under the patronage of HRH Princess Wijdan Ali, at 7:00 p.m. Followed by audio-visual performance (Memopuls... A city in motion) at 8:00 p.m.

* Paintings by Rafa Nasiri of Iraq, Ziad Dallout of Syria, and Najia Mehadji at the South Hall.

* Paintings by Jordanian artist Mohammad Qaloka at the Middle Hall.

* Sculpture, drawings, and paintings by Jordanian artist Rajwa Ali.

* Works by contemporary Arab artists at the Blue House.

* Paintings by children of Zarqa reflecting on the problem of pollution at the Byzantine church.

FILM

* "The Scarlet Letter" at the British Council, Jabal Amman at 6:00 p.m.

CONCERT

* Musical performance by Zarqa Band for Popular Art marking the Accession to Throne Anniversary at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Works by Basem Al Mahdi at the Jordan Plastic Art Association Gallery, Jabal Weibdeh, until Sept. 8.

* Artizaman and Bani Hamida present a Bani Hamida exhibition (rugs, cushions, runners, wall hangings and baskets) at the Al-Baidar Hall of Kan Zaman, until Sept. 20.

* Islamic Bookbinding Exhibition at the British Council, Jabal Amman, until Aug. 31.

Indian and Pakistani troops continue heavy border clashes

JAMMU, India (R) — Indian and Pakistani troops exchanged artillery fire along their Kashmir border for the fifth consecutive day Monday, Indian authorities said.

Troops fired mortar bombs and rockets at each other along the military line of control in Uri and Kupwara districts north of Srinagar, the summer capital of India's Jammu and Kashmir state.

But there were no reports of casualties and the firing was less intense than during a 48-hour stretch to Saturday when five people including three civilians were killed on the Indian side of the Himalayan border and at least four died on the Pakistani side.

"The intensity of the exchange of fire is less than compared to previous days," said a defence official in Jammu and Kashmir's winter capital, Jammu.

"Intermittent firing including artillery is still on, but since last night the intensity has reduced a bit," a military official in New Delhi said.

India and Pakistan Sunday accused each other of unprovoked cross-border firing in Kashmir, the cause of two of the three wars between the neighbouring nations since independence in 1947.

India Sunday said two Indian soldiers and three civilians were killed over a 48-hour stretch to Saturday by heavy Pakistani shelling in two sections of the Himalayan region.

A military official in New Delhi said Monday that over the past three days, Pakistan had fired at least 1,500 rounds of artillery, including 120mm guns, in some cases targeting civilian areas.

India said most of the firing Friday and Saturday took place in the Uri and Kargil sectors along the line of control that separates the Indian and Pakistani armies.

Kargil, a border town in the Ladakh region, is at an altitude of 3,000 metres and is 220 kilometres northwest of Srinagar. Uri also lies near the border and is 102 kilometres north of Srinagar.

Indian officials said that Sunday shelling spread to Kupwara, almost 90 kilometres north of Srinagar, and that Monday there was small arms fire in the Poonch sector of the Jammu region, 250 kilometres northwest of Jammu city.

Both nations have had troops stationed along the Himalayan border since they fought the first of two wars over the region in 1947, only two months after gaining independence from Britain.

The two sides regularly exchange small arms fire but resort to artillery and mortar less often.

The latest surge in cross-border firing preceded the third round of peace talks between top level Indian and Pakistani diplomats set for mid-September in New Delhi.

India controls two-thirds of the mountainous region and

Pakistan one third, but they both claim the entire area.

Pakistan insisted Monday there has been no unusual activity in disputed Kashmir, despite reports from India that 51 Pakistani soldiers have been killed there.

There has been "no unusual activity along the line of control (LOC)," which delineates the Indian and Pakistani zones of divided Kashmir, a Defence Ministry spokesman said here Monday.

Pakistan accused New Delhi of spreading propaganda, saying the Indians had their own motives for deliberately blowing up the situation.

One reason could be that India wanted to "cover up" its "unprovoked" firing on the Pakistani side of the control line Friday, they said, in which they claimed three civilians were killed and three others injured.

The officials rejected as "baseless" Indian claims that there had been an upsurge in firing from Pakistan.

"It is (a) known Indian pattern of sabotaging the process of dialogue initiated between Pakistan and India," the Defence Ministry spokesman said.

"It also betrays India's gimmick to smoke-screen the fresh phase of operation against Kashmiri mujahideen (freedom fighters) for the right to self-determination," the spokesman said.

After a diplomatic freeze lasting several years, the two countries opened talks in March to resolve their outstanding issues, diplomatic jargon for the 50-year-old Kashmir question.

The third round of the foreign secretary level talks is scheduled for September in New Delhi, but no date has yet been fixed.

A separatist drive by Kashmiri militants on the Indian side of the Muslim dominated territory has claimed more than 20,000 lives since 1989.

India accuses Pakistan of training and infiltrating militants in Kashmir.

Pakistan, which extends its political and diplomatic support to what it calls the Kashmiris' "legitimate struggle" for self-determination, denies the Indian charges.

Foreign office officials here say Pakistan in the past several times suggested that India agree to deploy neutral observers along the LOC to monitor alleged infiltration from the Pakistani side.

But India has not accepted the proposal.

U.N. military observers have been monitoring the LOC along the Pakistani side of Kashmir but India has not allowed them to do so from its side.

Foreign office officials here claim Indians are trying to hide their "repression" of the Kashmiri people by rejecting the proposal.

Australia considers buying cruise missiles

CANBERRA (R) — Australia said Monday it was considering purchasing long-range cruise missiles, a move that defence analysts immediately labelled a potential trigger for an arms race in South East Asia.

"Studies on this issue are continuing," a spokesman for Defence Minister Ian MacLachlan said, emphasising that no purchase was imminent. "We already have a potent strike force of F-111 aircraft and submarines," he said.

One defence official told Reuters that if missiles such as 1,500 kilometres range Tomahawks were bought, they would supplement rather than replace Australia's existing long punch, its fleet of F-111 strike bombers.

Australia's F-111 fleet has been in service for more than 20 years and will remain operational until 2020.

Defence analyst Andrew Mack said a Tomahawk purchase could spark a regional arms race. He urged Australia to seek instead an Asia-Pacific treaty banning such weapons.

"There is a very real risk if Australia is the very first country to introduce these long-range, highly destabilising, cruise missiles, other countries will want to have them," Mr. Mack told Australian Broadcasting Corporation Radio.

That would diminish Australian security, particularly because Australia plans to monitor the vast air and sea space to its north with over-the-horizon radars built in the middle of the continent — ideal targets for a long-range cruise missile.

"I think it would be a sensible idea, just as we have a South East Asian nuclear weapons free zone and we have a South Pacific nuclear weapons free zone, I think we should have a missile-free zone," Mr. Mack said.

The Tomahawk, built by Hughes Electronics Corp. Ghm. N. achieves long range by cruising on its jet engine like an aeroplane — thus the term "cruise" missile — rather than being thrown on a ballistic trajectory by a rocket motor.

Designed in the 1970s but since improved, the Tomahawk can be launched from ships, submarines and the ground and showed great accuracy in the Gulf War against Iraq.

Aircraft-launched cruise missiles would have less range.

South East Asian armed forces currently have little strategic reach. Their strike capabilities are embodied almost entirely in short-range fighters designed more for air-to-air combat than for hauling bombs and missiles.

One Australian defence department source, who asked not to be named, told Reuters that a cruise missile arms race would neutralise Australia's current strategic advantage.

Along among countries south of China, Australia operates a group of powerful strike bombers: 35 F-111s, which can hit targets more than 2,000 kilometres away with large weapon loads delivered with precision accuracy.

The F-111's variable-geometry wings spread out for it to cruise efficiently at high altitude like an airliner, and then swing back so the heavy aircraft can roar in to the target area at high speed and extremely low level.

"The last thing we want to do is start a cruise-missile arms race," the defence source told Reuters.

The Royal Australian Air Force is already equipping the F-111s with shorter-range missiles to improve their ability to hit heavily defended targets.

Indonesia dismisses Timor rebel leader's proposal

JAKARTA (R) — Indonesia dismissed Monday a proposal from an East Timor rebel leader for the former Portuguese colony to have a similar relationship with Jakarta as the United States shares with Puerto Rico.

In a message recorded in the mountains of East Timor and broadcast on Portuguese television on Friday, Mr. Konis Santana said his rebel movement would accept the transformation of East Timor into a state associated with Indonesia, in the same way as Puerto Rico is linked to the United States.

Puerto Rico has almost total autonomy with just foreign relations and defence the province of the U.S. government.

"We take the view that any solution which gives the people of East Timor the right to exercise self-determination is acceptable," Mr. Santana said in the broadcast. "Puerto Rico forms a viable working model."

However, Indonesian Foreign Ministry spokesman Ghaflar Fadyl dismissed the proposal and questioned Mr. Santana's credentials.

"Who does he represent? He represents a minority which is not satisfied with the integration (of East Timor into Indonesia), but he certainly does not represent the majority of the people of East Timor," Mr. Fadyl told Reuters.

Mr. Fadyl said the two existing U.N.-sponsored forums on East Timor — the tripartite talks between Indonesia and Portugal and the All-Inclusive East Timorese Dialogue (AIETD) — were the place for any new proposals.

"If any solution can be found, it will be done through the tripartite talks and the AIETD," Mr. Fadyl said.

"They are free to propose, they are free to say what they want, but will it be practical? Will it be something useful? It's nothing new. It is the same thing over and over again," he said.

The United Nations has never recognised Indonesia's 1976 annexation of East Timor.

got Wallstrom said at the weekend, after announcing that she would raise the issue of compensation with the Social Democratic government.

The leader of the Christian Democratic Party, Alf Svensson, has called for the establishment of a parliamentary commission to examine the issue.

The news of the policy, which to many reeks of Aryanism and Nazi-style race purification, comes less than a year after revelations that Sweden delivered railway tracks and ball bearings to Nazi Germany during World War II and was paid for the deliveries in gold, despite the fact Sweden was officially neutral.

The details of the sterilisation policy and personal accounts are just beginning to emerge.

Maria Nordin, now aged 72, underwent forced sterilisation at the age of 17.

She was sent away to a school for the learning and socially disabled because she had bad eyesight and could not read the blackboard. Glasses were never made available to her.

Miserable at the special school, she was forced to sign a document in 1943 giving the government the right to sterilise her — the only way she was allowed to leave the school. Her family was not informed by authorities.

After living with the quiet shame for decades, Ms. Nordin sought compensation from the government in 1996, but it was denied on the grounds that the procedure was legal at the time.

Ms. Wallstrom's decision to raise the issue with the government could mean that compensation could be granted.

According to Mr. Zaremba, many European countries discussed the idea of eliminating the weak in society, but Sweden, Denmark, Nazi Germany, Norway, Finland, Estonia and a Swiss canton were the only ones to put the theory into practice.

History Professor Gunnar Broberg said Sweden's political elite believed they were doing the right thing.

"The Social Democrats and doctors saw sterilisation as a social effort in line with the science of the time," Mr. Broberg said.



Chinese President Jiang Zemin addresses the 10th World Conference on Tobacco or Health held in Beijing. Organisers of the anti-smoking conference warned Sunday that Asia is the newest battleground for Western cigarette manufacturers and faces the biggest threat of death and disability from tobacco (Reuters photo)

'Tobacco will kill one-third of Chinese males under 30'

BEIJING (AFP) — As many as one-third of all Chinese males now under the age of 30 will die of smoking-related diseases, Health Minister Chen Minzhang told the 10th World Conference on Tobacco or Health here Monday.

The dire prediction was reinforced by World Health Organisation (WHO) Director General Hiroshi Nakajima, who described the growing tobacco epidemic in developing countries as "a fire in the ever-expanding global village."

Mr. Chen's forecast was based on the conclusions of a recent Sino-British study that investigated the smoking habits of one million people who died between 1986-1988 in rural and urban China.

"These new results indicate that tobacco will kill one-third of all the young men in China if the current rate of people taking up smoking persists," he said, adding that the country's tobacco-control lobby faced "a huge task."

The current smoking rate among Chinese aged 15 years or above is 37.62 per cent, 3.74 percentage points higher than in 1984. The

average age of those taking up the habit dropped from 23 to 20 during the same period.

"Of just over 300 million males now aged 0-29, about 200 million will become smokers. If they continue to smoke throughout their lives, 100 million will eventually be killed by tobacco," the minister said.

Half of these deaths will occur before the age of 70, he added. There are already 750,000 deaths a year — or 2,000 every day — from smoking-related diseases in China, most of them men, Mr. Chen said on the second day of the five-day global conference.

According to official figures, there are nearly 320 million smokers in China — 300 million of them men — in a population of 1.22 billion. Cigarette production is a wholly state-controlled sector in China and, despite the appalling health costs, Mr. Chen admitted that the government could not afford to simply ban, or even restrict, their manufacture.

"Tobacco is still a key economic sector in China, and anyway the smoking habit cannot be quit in just

one day," Mr. Chen said, adding that production simply reflected demand.

China earned 41 billion yuan (\$4.9 billion) in tax revenues from cigarette producers in 1993, but the economic loss through ill health in the same year was 65 billion yuan.

While the government has introduced some restrictions on leaf tobacco production, Mr. Chen stressed that the eradication of demand through education was the only genuine control measure.

China sought to encourage bans on cigarette advertising in early 1995, but so far only 10 cities have been recognised as "advertising-free."

WHO chief Nakajima voiced deep concern at the new Chinese statistics revealed by Mr. Chen.

"Stronger measures are needed to slow the increase in this epidemic of tobacco mortality in China and everywhere else in the world," he said, adding that developing countries were especially at risk.

Each year tobacco causes about 3.5 million deaths globally, and this will increase to 10 million annual deaths during the 2020s, Mr. Nakajima said, adding that seven million of those deaths would occur in the developing world.

"The absence of an international agreement protecting less developed countries from the marketing assault of the tobacco giants makes these countries even more vulnerable," Mr. Nakajima said.

He also warned that China's eventual entry into the World Trade Organisation (WTO) may prompt foreign tobacco firms to label China's restrictions on foreign cigarette imports as an unfair trade "practice and demand their removal."

"We must make sure they are not allowed to do this," Mr. Nakajima said.

The triennial conference is being hosted by the Chinese Association on Smoking and Health and the Chinese Medical Association, under the auspices of several international bodies, including the WHO and the United Nations Children's Fund. It is the first time it has been held in a developing country.

Danish support for EU Amsterdam Treaty rising — poll

COPENHAGEN (R) — A growing number of Danes support the European Union's (EU) Amsterdam Treaty reforms but many still remain undecided, the latest opinion poll showed Monday.

Forty per cent of respondents said they would vote for the changes and 29 per cent against if a referendum were held today, according to the Vilstrup survey published in the Politiken daily.

But 22 per cent did not know how they would vote on the treaty, agreed by an EU summit in Amsterdam in June, and nine per cent intended not to vote.

EU leaders decided in Amsterdam to leave the Western European Union defence grouping independent of the union, to grant Britain and Ireland opt-outs from a plan to lift internal border checks, to make job creation a formal EU goal, and to increase cooperation in foreign policy and asylum policy.

The summit left key institutional reforms to be taken early next century.

Denmark has so far not set any date for a referendum on the treaty but the most likely time appears to be in May, after its Supreme Court gives a final ruling on a legal challenge to the constitutionality of the country's existing treaties with the EU.

An Aug. 8 Greens poll showed 32 per cent voting to accept the treaty and 31 per cent rejecting it, with a solid 36.5 per cent uncertain how they would vote.

The Supreme Court hearing follows the High Court's dismissal of a suit by a group of Danes, which charges that, since joining the EU in 1973, Denmark has ceded national authority to European institutions in breach of its own constitution.

Most analysts expect the appeal to fail, but if it succeeds the government must either renegotiate all its EU treaties or amend the constitution, both long and tortuous processes.

Danes traditionally have a lukewarm attitude to Europe. They shocked their fellow EU members by flatly rejecting the Maastricht Treaty on closer European cooperation in a referendum in 1992.

They only voted to ratify the treaty the following year on condition that Denmark opt out of economic and monetary union, a joint defence structure, cross-border policing and a common asylum policy.

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Undated picture of Maria Nordin, 72, who was compulsorily sterilised aged 17 in 1943, pictured at her home in Gavle. The Swedish government is considering compensation for Ms. Nordin and some other 60,000 people who underwent forced sterilisation in the 1930's and 1940's (AFP photo)

World News

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A heavily wounded Cambodian guerrilla fighter, loyal to ousted co-Premier Prince Norodom Ranariddh, with his T-shirt covered in blood is helped across the border by Thai soldiers. Cambodian troops loyal to strongman Hun Sen overran most of O'Smach in fierce fighting which continued late Sunday (Reuters photo)

Zambian government denies it wanted to assassinate Kaunda

LUSAKA (AFP) — The Zambian government Monday vehemently denied claims that it had wanted to assassinate former President Kenneth Kaunda at the weekend, though he was grazed by a bullet at a rally Saturday.

Vice-President Brigadier Godfrey Miyanda told reporters there was no way the government could kill Mr. Kaunda, leader of the United National Independence Party (UNIP).

Other senior government officials, including Minister of Information and Broadcasting David Mpamba have expressed similar sentiments.

"I categorically deny that we want to kill Kaunda. We have no intention of eliminating him or any opposition leader. If things happened the way it has been reported in the press then it is very sad," Mr. Mpamba said.

He warned Mr. Kaunda that there was a legitimate government in place which he should respect.

"He (Kaunda) has said before that this country is under autocrat leadership but he should realise that there is an elected government in place," Mr. Mpamba stated.

Reacting to the incident, the minister in charge of central province, Abel Chambezi, said police were instructed to disrupt the rally to prevent a fight with a pro-government group.

But he said he regretted the use of live ammunition. "The use of live ammunition is regrettable but it must be emphasised that if the police had allowed the rally to continue the reaction from pro-government supporters would have been violent," he said.

Mr. Kaunda was grazed by a bullet in the head, fired by a sniper at a failed opposition rally in the central town of Kabwe Saturday.

The chairman of the opposition alliance, Roger Chongwe, was also hit in the neck by another sniper.

Police say investigations have been launched into what happened in the normally quiet and peaceful town.

Mr. Kaunda charged that the incidents were intended to assassinate himself and Mr. Chongwe, but added that he would continue his fight to remove President Frederick Chiluba through non-violent means.

Tension was high Monday both in the capital and the former mining town, which is also the base of UNIP. Hundreds of heavily armed paramilitary and riot police — most of them trained by Israelis — have been strategically deployed.

Mr. Kaunda claims that most of the newly trained police officers are cadres of the ruling Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD).

Most people in the country did not know about the assassination attempt because the state-run Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) — radio and television — blacked out the story for about 24 hours.

Taipei strongly opposed the "hegemonic mentality of Chinese Communists" and would never accept the "one country, two systems" formula under which Hong Kong is to be ruled following its return to Chinese rule on July 1, Mr. Lee added.

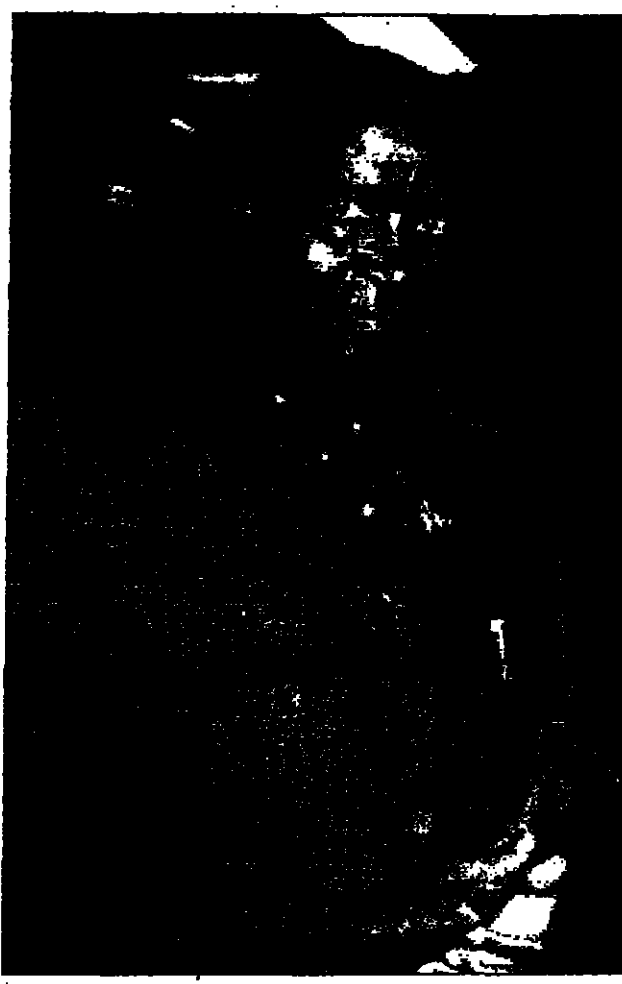
But he said Taiwan would strive for the future of all Chinese with the "utmost patience and pragmatic action" and care for the livelihoods of the people in Hong Kong and Macau.

Mr. Lee is expected to be reelected KMT chairman Tuesday to consolidate his power. Mr. Lien, who resigned last week over social disorder centered on a string of unsolved brutal crimes, is to retain the vice-chairmanship with three other party heavyweights.

"We hope the Communist Chinese authorities will abandon their prejudices and resume cross-strait dialogue to pave way for a win-win situation," Mr. Lien said in his administrative report.

He hoped the two sides could end almost 50 years of hostility by the end of the 20th century to create a climate in which "Chinese do not fight against Chinese."

China has suspended top-level talks since mid-1995 to protest a landmark trip by Mr. Lee to the United States which it viewed as move promoting independence.



Former Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda (Reuters photo)

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Another 60 were wounded and 15 of them were still in hospital.

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The Tiger attack came as thousands of government soldiers kept up a major offensive against the LTTE in the

Taiwan's Lee pledges to reunify with China

TAIPEI (AFP) — Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui opened the 15th party congress of the ruling Kuomintang (KMT) Monday pledging to reunify with China and step up efforts to boost the island's small number of diplomatic allies.

Mr. Lee, also KMT chairman, attacked Beijing's hegemony but promised to adopt a peace-oriented policy towards Taiwan's arch rival which considers this Nationalist island part of its territory.

Outgoing Premier Lien Chan, meanwhile, urged Beijing to end cross-strait hostilities by reopening top-level talks with Taipei and facilitating the exchange of visits by leaders.

"We will not, and there is no need, to seek so-called 'independence' since the Republic of China (the official name of Taiwan) has been a sovereign state for the past 86 years," Mr. Lee told the opening ceremony.

"It is our ultimate goal to seek reunification of all China under freedom, democracy and prosperity on the principles of reason, peace and reciprocity," he told the 2,300 delegates.

Taiwan has been split from mainland China since Communist forces drove Nationalist troops here at the end of a civil war in 1949. Beijing has since regarded the island as a renegade province.

Taipei strongly opposed the "hegemonic mentality of Chinese Communists" and would never accept the "one country, two systems" formula under which Hong Kong is to be ruled following its return to Chinese rule on July 1, Mr. Lee added.

But he said Taiwan would strive for the future of all Chinese with the "utmost patience and pragmatic action" and care for the livelihoods of the people in Hong Kong and Macau.

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The Tiger attack came as thousands of government soldiers kept up a major offensive against the LTTE in the

Artillery, mortar fire resumes after Cambodian town falls to Hun Sen

CHON CHOM PASS, Thailand (R) — Artillery and mortar fire resumed in intermittent bursts on the Cambodian border Monday, less than 12 hours after the last royalist stronghold fell to troops loyal to strongman Hun Sen, witnesses said.

The witnesses said they were surprised to hear intermittent artillery and mortar fire coming from the direction of O'Smach, the last base of troops loyal to Prince Norodom Ranariddh, because the royalists had said they were low on ammunition.

Troops loyal to Mr. Hun Sen fired back more than 20 artillery and mortar rounds late Monday morning, and the shells exploded just metres away from the barbed wire dividing the besieged town and Thailand.

Fighting has been taking place in various parts of Cambodia since Second Prime Minister Hun Sen ousted Prince Ranariddh as first prime minister after bloody clashes July 5-6 in Phnom Penh.

After several weeks of fighting and fierce weekend battles around O'Smach, the last group of Prince Ranariddh's troops were seen Sunday afternoon taking down the picture of King Norodom Sihanouk from the town's main pavilion.

They put the picture in their last armoured personnel carrier (APC), then waved to reporters and

drove away. About 50 other soldiers collected their pigs and belongings and walked out of the town behind the APC.

But Monday morning, about five royalist soldiers reemerged and were seen strolling up and down the town's main street.

Witnesses and officials on the Thai side of the border said it appeared they were trying to provoke Hun Sen troops, who were dug in just metres from the border, to fire in the direction of Thailand. In the past, when shells spilled over onto Thai soil, Thai soldiers fired back.

Cambodian government forces Monday clashed with a small group of former Khmer Rouge guerrillas who have joined the side of the royalist resistance in the country's northwest, military officials said.

About 50 former Khmer Rouge rebels who defected to the government last October were now fighting government troops near O'Tea village, said General Bun Seng, commander of the Battambang-based Fifth Military Region in northwest Cambodia.

"The government is fighting them now," he said. His troops were closing in on the small band, which had received money and weapons from opposition forces fighting for Prince Ranariddh, Gen. Bun Seng said.

He said the fighting with the group first flared on

Aug. 15 at O'Tea, a village two kilometres from the border with Thailand's Trat province.

Khmer Rouge guerrillas from the northern jungle base of Anlong Veng fought alongside Prince Ranariddh's ragged army in O'Smach.

The group of 50 ex-Khmer Rouge rebels were now fighting for their last pocket of territory in O'Tea, about 300 kilometres southwest of O'Smach, Gen. Bun Seng said. The conflict had sent civilians fleeing the area, he added.

More than 2,000 civilians fled to Trat province in Thailand since the fighting first started on Aug. 15, he told Reuters.

Gen. Bun Seng said the clashes were not expected to last long because the ex-Khmer Rouge were thought to be short of food and arms.

The remnants of the Khmer Rouge, architects of the 1975-79 "killing fields" regime, were on the verge of signing peace talks with Prince Ranariddh when Mr. Hun Sen deposed the prince early last month.

Thousands of rebels defected from Khmer Rouge ranks last year.

In an effort to sanitise their image and legitimise their alliance with Prince Ranariddh's troops, the rebels have since split with infamous leader Pol Pot, condemning him to house arrest for life in a show trial in Anlong Veng.

Protesters of charter changes rally at Filipino congress

MANILA (AFP) — Some 300 members of Philippine leftist labour groups Monday forced their way into the congress grounds protesting moves to amend the constitution, witnesses said.

A group of protesters commandeered a large truck and rammed it through a five-metre high grille gate allowing them to enter the grounds, they said. But they were unable to enter the session hall when they were blocked by a handful of Philippine Marines.

No arrests were made and no one was hurt in the incident. Protesters, led by the National Confederation of Labour, then proceeded to burn an effigy of President Fidel Ramos.

The protesters' rally followed that of a group of 6,000 members of the Multisectoral Alliance for People's Democratic Action (MAPDA) in support of charter changes. There were no clashes reported between the two groups.

Monday's rallies came amid a brewing war of words between Ramos and Manila Archbishop Cardinal Jaime Sin.

About 2,000 members of MAPDA were later allowed inside congress' session hall where lawmakers are set to begin debates on measures to amend the constitution.

The emergence of "global forces" has made the 1987 Philippine constitution obsolete, said MAPDA head Noma Ricafort, adding that the "constitution should be relevant and alive."

MAPDA, a coalition of 79 cause-oriented groups, claims a total membership of six million, and said it was separate from a private group formed last year which spearheaded moves to amend the charter based on a signature-gathering drive to extend Mr. Ramos' term which expires in 1998.

Typhoon races toward rain-drenched Philippines

MANILA (AFP) — Typhoon Amber swirled toward the northern Philippines Monday as authorities raised storm warnings over several provinces in its path.

Francisco Nilo, chief forecaster at the Manila Weather Bureau, said the typhoon was packing winds of 165 kilometres per hour with gusts of up to 195 kilometres per hour.

It was heading west-northwest towards the north of Luzon, the main island, at nine kilometres per hour, he said.

The bureau monitored the typhoon at 680 kilometres east of the northern town of Aparri at 10 a.m. (0200 GMT) Monday.

The storm is projected to be 490 kilometres south of Aparri by Tuesday morning.

Weather officials have raised the second stage of a four-level warning system over the northernmost Batanes Islands, and the provinces of Isabela and Cagayan.

These provinces will have "stormy weather" from Tuesday on, the bureau said, with some areas in danger of all types of vessels.

The first-stage storm warning was in effect in 13 northern provinces and on Luzon's east coast.

The typhoon will also induce the southwest monsoon, which is expected to drench metropolitan Manila with heavy rain and threaten mudflows in provinces north of the capital city, the bureau added.

Disaster relief officials in Pampanga province north of here said they were planning precautionary measures to handle any new volcanic mudflow that might be unleashed by typhoon Amber.

Volcanic ash left from the eruption of Pinatubo Volcano in 1991 periodically mixes with rainwater during storms, forming destructive mudflows that have swamped whole towns.

Monsoon rains induced by Typhoon Winnie last week flooded large parts of the country, including the capital, killing over 20 people and forcing half a million to seek refuge in evacuation centres.

Officials in Pampanga said five towns are still flooded from last week's monsoon rains with four other towns still partially flooded. These floods are expected to be worsened by Typhoon Amber, they said.

The current constitution bars the president from seeking a second term.

Top aides of Mr. Ramos and Card. Sin downplayed Monday the feud between the two leaders, after Mr. Ramos, in obvious reference to Card. Sin, said Sunday it was "unchristian and unpatriotic for anyone to call for non-cooperation

and divisiveness" among Filipinos.

His comments followed the cardinal's call last week for the people "to disassociate themselves from supporting an administration that has lost their trust and respect."

Mr. Ramos' Executive Secretary Ruben Torres said in a radio interview Monday

Congress will begin debates Wednesday on charter change moves which range from the convening of a constituent assembly to granting official recognition to a petition-signing campaign seeking constitutional amendments.

Tigers pound east Sri Lanka for 2nd day; toll hits 8

COLOMBO (AFP) — Tamil Tiger guerrillas launched a fresh mortar bomb attack against military positions in eastern Sri Lanka for the second straight day Monday, raising the death toll to eight, officials said.

The separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) fired mortars against a police post in the Padirippu area of the Batticaloa district Monday, killing a constable and a fisherman, officials said.

"At least three more civilians were wounded in Monday's attack," a local official in Batticaloa, 300 kilometres east of here, said by telephone. He said four civilians and two security personnel were killed in the Sunday night mortar bomb attack against the town of Batticaloa.

Another 60 were wounded and 15 of them were still in hospital.

The civilians were hit when the LTTE targeted the main military headquarters known as the 223-Brigade in the heart of Batticaloa town, officials said.

The Tiger attack came as thousands of government soldiers kept up a major offensive against the LTTE in the

north of the country where 437 people have been killed in the past week.

Defence sources said the army advance into rebel-held territory to open a strategic land route has been delayed due to intense resistance by the guerrillas.

However, the Defence Ministry said Saturday that security forces achieved "very satisfactory results" and had been able to "draw and kill large groups of terrorists from their concentrations."

The ministry said 70 Tigers were killed Friday, raising rebel losses since the latest military push was started Tuesday to 360. Seven soldiers were also killed Friday, raising military losses to 77.

The Tiger guerrillas are leading a drawn-out campaign for independence in the island's northern and eastern regions, where the two million Tamil minority is concentrated.

Meanwhile, Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga said Monday her government would call a referendum on a new constitution aimed at resolving the country's ethnic war.

Jordan Times

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Source of ills
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THE INTERNATIONAL group that monitors violations of an Israeli-Lebanese agreement that came into effect in 1996 to protect civilians from outbreaks of hostilities along the border has blamed both countries for the latest round of fighting in which civilian targets were hit, killing and wounding many people. "It is incumbent upon Israel," the group said in a communiqué issued Sunday, "to keep those cooperating with it from carrying out attacks and that it shall do its utmost to achieve this commitment." The international monitors were obviously referring to the South Lebanon Army's (SLA) artillery attack on Sidon last week in which seven Lebanese civilians were killed. Lebanon was also chided for not preventing the Hizbollah militia from firing Katyusha rockets into northern Israel.

Israel has tried in vain to distance itself from the SLA attack on Sidon even though it is a well-known fact that its members are totally under its control and operate in close collaboration with the Israeli army. The same, though, cannot be said about the Hizbollah militia whose armed men operate independently of the Lebanese state and often against the better judgement of the government in Beirut. Since the international monitoring system was established in the aftermath of the 17-day Israeli offensive in South Lebanon in April of 1996 to prevent the antagonists from targeting civilians, it is only fair not to lump the two groups in the same category.

Israel, it should be remembered, is the occupying power in South Lebanon. It continues this occupation despite repeated U.N. Security Council resolutions demanding its withdrawal. Neither Lebanon nor Hizbollah can be equated with the SLA, which is but a stooge of the Israelis and consequently the occupation.

It is a legitimate act of self-defence for any state to wage a military struggle to end the occupation of any part of its territory. The Israeli armed presence in South Lebanon has dragged on for too long, and it is high time that a formula was found to end it.

The ultimate solution to the outbursts of fighting on the border lies first and foremost in the termination of the Israeli occupation. The reactivation of the peace talks on the Lebanese front, on the other hand, offers the most effective way to end the suffering of civilians on both sides.

The Israeli government cannot hope to maintain peace and tranquillity for its people in northern Israel while maintaining the unacceptable and, for that matter, dangerous status quo in southern Lebanon.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Ra'i daily urged the Arab governments to stop paying the Israelis tip service and undertake measures that would actually end the sanctions imposed on Iraq. Mahmoud Jbour said it is not enough for Arab governments to say that they respect Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity and suffice themselves with conducting trade with Iraq on the basis of the U.N.-Iraq oil-for-food deal. The Arab leaders should realise that the U.S.-Israeli alliance has created the Gulf crisis in order to guarantee Washington's complete domination of the Arab oil wealth and to force the Arab regimes to succumb to Israel's demand and terms in the subsequent negotiations that started in Madrid, said the writer. The United States is claiming that it must retain the sanctions on Iraq whose regime does not respect human rights and democratic rule at a time when Washington and its allies realise too well that Washington's friends in the Arab region have no respect for democracy or human rights, according to the writer. The writer said that with the continuation of the sanctions against Iraq, the Arab countries remain at the mercy of the U.S.-Israeli alliance, warning that the consequences of the sanctions are hurting and continue to hurt the Arab states at large, particularly Jordan. He said that Jordan has a vested interest in ending this awkward situation.

A WRITER for Al Dustour said that the Arab masses appreciate efforts to hold a conference on the defence of Jerusalem in the face of Zionism's onslaught and continued occupation and aggression. We have to admit that the conference came too late and that the efforts are too weak, especially as the conference represented the opposition but not the Palestinian authority, said Mohammad Daoud. As to the resolutions of this conference, they will remain ink on paper unless they are backed by practical steps to stop Israel's drive to Judaize the Arab city, he said. The writer said that the Israeli drive had started in the days of the British mandate and the Zionists measures and plots can by no means be countered or aborted through speeches and rhetoric. Zionism is a world organisation helping Israel to consolidate its hold over Palestine and can by no means be stopped except through concerted effort on the part of the Arab and Islamic World working together, stressed the writer. He said what Jerusalem requires now is not speeches and debates, but rather well organised plans and well prepared masses to offer sacrifices for the sake of the Holy City and to exert all efforts to keep the Arab and Islamic ranks united in the face of the common threat.

The View from Fourth Circle

The opposition, the state, the NCP
and the privatisation of politics

By Rami G. Khouri

THE ISLAMIST-led boycott of the Nov. 4 parliamentary elections is mainly a symptom of something deeper that has plagued other developing countries: the issue of one-party rule as an appropriate means of governance that consolidates the prevalent consensus within the power elite. We are fortunate that the political contest on this issue is taking place at an early stage in our political liberalisation, while the domestic balance of power is still finding its equilibrium among the leftists, Islamists, centrist-tribalists, Jordanian nationalists, Arab nationalists, Levantine nationalists, and technocratic free marketeers. If an effective multi-party system takes root here, we might avoid some of the political tensions that have plagued one-party-ruled states such as Sudan, Mexico, Kenya, Somalia, Algeria, Egypt, Indonesia, Iraq and many others.

Several interesting things have happened since the Islamic Action Front and four other smaller parties announced their boycott of the November elections six weeks ago, in the following order of importance, in my view: 1. The political system has yet again proved itself broadly unable to engage in meaningful action without the direct, forceful intervention of the monarchy. The opposition and the government were going nowhere until His Majesty King Hussein personally intervened to prod movement towards "dialogue" on the multiple issues that the opposition had raised (such as, accusations that the executive branch of government is heavyhanded, does not take the opposition seriously, has downgraded the role of parliament, passes too many temporary laws, harasses opposition political parties and, has skewed the elections against the opposition because of the one-person, one-vote electoral law, the nature of the electoral districts, the refusal to allow international monitoring, and the state's privileged access to the electronic mass media).

The recurring inability of the political system to exercise effective politics raises important questions about the very nature of the evolving governance system in Jordan and in most other Third World states — given that the modern, Western mechanisms of political governance (political parties, parliaments) tend often to fail the test of credibility, while the traditional forms (monarchy, tribalism, religion and ethnicity) continue to assert their relevance and dynamism. If this issue is irritating to many people, it is also unavoidable and its causes and implications must be grasped.

2. The scope and seriousness of the contested issues now on the table highlight the need for both government and opposition to act with boldness and flexibility, rather than

with irresponsible arrogance or immature defiance. The relatively swift expansion of the election boycott beyond the Islamists, to encompass some leftists, centrists and professional associations, and the broadening of opposition complaints to include the peace process and socio-economic conditions, confirm the seriousness of the situation, and the very wide range of real pressures and fears that define many people's lives. What is not known is the extent to which the Islamist and leftist opposition represent a significant minority or a slim majority.

Most available signs — including the relatively high voter registration this month and the very small numbers of opposition political party members — suggest they represent a minority that raises issues of interest to the majority.

The opposition has a very mixed track record in recent years. It failed to stop the peace treaty with Israel, but succeeded in limiting normalisation of ties with Israel. It failed to reduce the extent of the economic adjustment programme, but succeeded in moderating Jordan's policies towards Iraq. The current political contest is fascinating because it encompasses all the important issues of concern to the public, including peace with Israel, the economy, domestic freedoms and the use of political power by the state. This is, therefore, a critically important test of the vitality of the opposition in Jordan, which, ironically, perhaps sadly, has found political abstention to be its most effective means of exercising political power. Such is the reality of our Third World. One hopes that this leads to serious dialogue, and then to meaningful political action and compromise, rather than to permanent paralysis. Some good signs are visible already. The slow, quiet, impressive about-face by the government on election monitoring — which now seems more acceptable and less demeaning to the state — is the kind of responsible and reasonable compromise that is required, as is the opposition's repeated affirmation of its willingness to drop its boycott if it receives a satisfactory government response to its demands.

3. The statement boycotting the elections that was issued in mid-August by some 80 political personalities is both peripheral and important. It is peripheral because only about a dozen of the signatories represent really meaningful political forces in the country, though signatories such as Ahmad Obaidat, Taher Masri, Labib Qamhawi, Hamad Farhan, Fakhri Kassar, Faris Nabulsi, Mrewid Telli, Ali Mahafza, and some others reflect the very wide range of potential opposition forces that could be mustered under

the right conditions. And it is important because it takes the gloves off and states the real fear of the opposition: that the government and state are paving the way for the political power structure to be dominated by the new National Constitutional Party (NCP), even though the name of the party is not spelled out in the statement. The statement charges that this government, building on the failed domestic and foreign policies of the previous government that brought the country to a dangerous political and economic impasse, "provides cover for political hegemony by a single power in the guise of a political party." It also charges that "the constitution and the law have become tools in the hands of any government to be used as a basis for arbitrary action and imposing increased restrictions, especially with the regressive press and publications law."

The opposition fears that the government of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali is paving the way for the dominance of the next government by the NCP, which is headed by the prime minister's brother, Abdul Hadi Majali. The NCP, which was created by the amalgamation of eight political parties, denies this, comfortable in the expectation that it may win as many as half the 80 seats in parliament in November, given its powerful tribal and ideological base throughout the country. In fact, the NCP merely institutionalises a strong dual reality that has become self-evident in recent years: first, that the political power structure is heavily dominated by centrist, tribalist forces that are closely aligned with the state and monarchy; and second, that the majority of Jordanians seem unconcerned and even satisfied with this situation.

The only new element is that a significant minority of Jordanians is not happy with this trend and fears that the advent of democratisation, liberalisation, elections and political parties will merely shift the absolute control of the power structure and national resources from the state to a new force that is a modern version of the tribal confederations of the past. In fact, what we may be witnessing is the privatisation of the domestic political system, in parallel with the slow privatisation of the economy (something similar has happened in Egypt and Lebanon in recent years, with equally lively opposition responses). That this struggle is taking place in the open, during the era of the birth of politics in Jordan, is a healthy phenomenon that is worth watching. Its outcome will tell us much about where we and others like us in the developing South will end up on that spectrum of national viability and well-being that spans the very long distance from Somalia to Switzerland.

'One cannot expect peace and security while Palestinians continue to suffer and not one word is said about the causes of that suffering'

By Edward Said

IT HAS taken four years for the Oslo peace process to peel off its wrappings to reveal the stark truth hidden at its core: there was no peace agreement, only an agreement to keep Israeli hegemony over the Palestinian territories, safeguarded by hypocritical rhetoric and military power.

In this, there was a lamentable Palestinian failure to judge Israeli motives — especially under Labour — and to preserve a degree of scepticism. Instead, we entered a spiral of loss and humiliation, gulled by the United States and the media into thinking that we had at last achieved some measure of respectability and acceptance, bludgeoned by Israel into accepting its pathological definitions of security and dialogue, all of which has impoverished Palestinians, whose per-capita income has been slashed by half.

We have lost our ability to move around freely, confined to the dreadful little Bantustans (about 3 per cent of the West Bank) that we insist on calling liberated zones, obliged to watch more settlements being built and more land taken, more houses destroyed, more people evicted, and sadistic collective punishments meted out without proportion or reason.

Western liberals must remember that Oslo was not a tabula rasa; it came after 26 years of Israeli military occupation and, before that, 19 years of Palestinian dispossession, exile, oppression. If Israel has all along insisted that it is not responsible for what has been visited on the Palestinian people since 1948, then it should explain why we, alone of all people, should forget the past, remain uncompensated, even as all other victims of injustice have the right to reparations and apologies. There is no logic to that, only the cold, hard, narcissistic indifference of amoral power.

I have not heard one Palestinian applaud or even mildly approve of the marketplace bombings last month. They were stupid, criminal acts that have brought disaster on our people. Yet the media and the Israeli and the U.S. governments, united with Micronesia in the United Nations (a marvellous

alliance), have insisted that Palestinian terror and violence be stopped.

Even the all-purpose Amos Oz has demanded that we decide between peace and violence, as if Israel had grounded its planes, stopped bombing and occupying South Lebanon (two 70-year-old Lebanese men were killed by Israeli planes at the time of the marketplace bombings: why is that not violence and terror?) and withdrawn all its troops out of the 97 per cent of the West Bank it still controls, along with the military checkpoints that it has planted between every major Palestinian centre.

Israel and its American supporters have rarely troubled themselves with any of these facts, which Israel is entitled to fabricate or annul on the ground and in the media as it suits its purposes. Neither of the two suicide bombers has been identified; neither, it is practically certain, came from the Palestinian territories; no recognisable party or group has claimed credible responsibility for the crime.

On the contrary, Israel, in its mania for security, has retained control of every exit and entrance into the territories, and it alone is responsible for West Jerusalem, where the attack took place. How dare the egregious Benjamin Netanyahu and his American minions demand that Islamic militants be summarily arrested, and Israeli security be guaranteed?

"If Israel has all along insisted that it is not responsible for what has been visited on the Palestinian people since 1948, then it should explain why we, alone of all people, should forget the past, remain uncompensated, even as all other victims of injustice have the right to reparations and apologies. There is no logic to that, only the cold, hard, narcissistic indifference of amoral power."

Who does he think he is addressing as his bonded servant, and by what standards of human decency does he dare assume that the hundreds of Palestinians murdered during the intifada, the victims of the Sabra and Shatila massacres

— all of them directly the responsibility of Israel — are nothing compared to Israel's security needs?

Only a few weeks ago the Israeli justice system ruled unilaterally that victims of Israel's military during the intifada were not entitled to pursue their claims against the state since it was a "war" situation. Who do they think they are, that they can make light of or ignore what they have done to us and still wrap themselves in the mantle of "the survivors"? Is there no term limit, is there no sense of respect for the victims' victims, is there no barrier to what Israel can do and continue to demand the privileges of the innocent?

As Anthony Lewis put it in the New York Times, Israel holds most of the cards; to blame the Palestinians for every misfortune or incident inside Israel is to jumble up blame with illusion. He is right, and right also to admit that there isn't much hope for peace in such circumstances. I have been unsparing in my criticism of Arafat and his associates for what they have done during the past five years: now I concur fully with his policy of refusing to negotiate on "security" as Israel defines it (i.e. rounding up "Islamic" suspects to Israel's satisfaction) until Israel fulfils the terms of Oslo that it has so far either blatantly violated or simply brushed off.

Bill Clinton and Madeleine Albright repeat the formula

destroyed, whose young men and women languish in Israeli jails or are strip-searched, who are driven out of Jerusalem so that Russian Jews can be settled in their homes, killed and deprived of any right to resist Israeli occupation policies, what is the equivalent of an Israeli-American bulldozer.

There is a simple racist premise underpinning the "peace process," and rhetorical ambushes set in its name, that Palestinian and Arab lives aren't worth as much as Israeli Jewish lives. Last year when 100 Lebanese civilians hiding in a U.N. shelter were deliberately targeted and killed by Israeli jets and helicopter gunships, there was no Israeli apology, no demand from the U.S. that Israel curb its bombers, no willingness even to accept the U.N. secretary-general's report.

Is there any real meaning to the nonsensical charade that the U.S. (and its army of former Israeli lobbyists, now in charge of the "peace process") still continues to pretend that it is somehow for "peace" and can be an even-handed negotiator?

The only peace worth its name is an exchange of land for peace, on the basis of rough parity between the two sides. There can be no peace without some genuine attempt on the part of Israel and its powerful supporters to take a step towards the people they have wronged, which they must take in humility and reconciliation, not with clever talk and cruel behaviour. Very few of us want back everything we lost in 1948, but we do want some acknowledgement of what we lost and of Israel's role in that mass dispossession (which so many of Israel's new historians have excavated with courage and assiduity).

Many Palestinians do not want to return to their land, but they ask why any Jew, anywhere, has the theoretical right of return, whereas we have none at all. And Israel's citizens and its friends need to ask themselves openly whether they think that Israel can go on abusing and humiliating Palestinians, showing contempt for Arabs, flaunting its brazen actions and, at the same time, enjoy real recognition and acceptance.

The sad fact is that both the

U.S. and Israel are so out of touch with Arab actualities, so enamoured of clichés about Islamic terror and Arab radicalism and anti-Semitism, that they seem to have missed the fact that Arabs want peace, that Palestinians want also to lead a decent life of independence and democracy, as much as the common Israeli or American. Why then lay up stores of resentment and hatred that will surely delay peace for Israelis and Arabs for years more?

"Terror bombing is terrible, and it cannot be condoned. But the bulldozers of forgetfulness and righteous arrogance are also terrible. Israel's constant demands for security conceal, I think, a deep insecurity about Israel's 'original sin' — the fact that there was always another people in Palestine, and that every village, kibbutz, settlement, city and town had an Arab history."

Terror bombing is terrible, and it cannot be condoned. But the bulldozers of forgetfulness and righteous arrogance are also terrible. Israel's constant demands for security conceal, I think, a deep insecurity about Israel's "original sin" — the fact that there was always another people in Palestine, and that every village, kibbutz, settlement, city and town had an Arab history.

Moshe Dayan used to admit this publicly. The present generation of leaders hasn't his honesty. The worst are Israel's lobby and the pro-Israeli organisations in the U.S. who repeat the dreadful clichés

and celebrate Israel, without a trace of awareness that there is tragedy beneath every road, every act of military prowess, every settlement. What hypocrisy is it to rail against Islamic fundamentalism and to say nothing of Jewish fundamentalism that dehumanises every non-Jew and relies on Biblical promises that go back two millennia?

To mouth phrases about "getting the negotiations going" in such a context is to play King Canute, as if only state department planners and Israeli policy-makers are capable of defining history and reality. The air needs to be cleared, honesty and simple fairness given a chance. Yes, Palestinians want peace, but not at any price and not the way Netanyahu and company define it, with millions of conditions concealing an unbending rejection of the desire for Palestinian equality.

People respond to a call for justice and the end of fear and oppression, not to the heaviness of something called a "peace process" in which Israel has all the advantages (plus a nuclear arsenal) and demands that Palestinians are there only to give it "security". I fear that at present the atmosphere is too inflamed by lies, too corrupted by illusions and self-fulfilling prophecies to allow us all to move forward. But a start needs to be made somewhere and somehow, blame apportioned properly and responsibility assigned proportionately.

One cannot always expect a people without statehood, without rights, without hope, to act like diplomats sitting in seminar rooms talking about scenarios and confidence-building measures as so many abstractions. What we need now — and certainly the U.S. can take the step — is a restatement of the basic premise that there is peace only when land is given back, and that the goal is independence and statehood for two peoples in Palestine.

Start from that, and it might be possible to move towards the goal in as many steps as are necessary. But one cannot expect peace and security while Palestinians continue to suffer and not one word is said about the causes of that suffering.

The Guardian

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Afghan executed in S. Arabia for drug trafficking

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Jordanian delegation leaves to Syria today to attend opening of Damascus Fair

AMMAN (J.T.) — A Jordanian delegation led by Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Hani Mulki leaves for Damascus today to attend the opening of the annual Damascus International Fair on Aug. 28, 1997.

The delegation groups Haidar Murad, the chairman of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce, as well as the heads of the chambers of Irbid and Zarqa and 40 federation members and representatives of other private sector businesses.

In a statement on the eve of the delegation's departure, Mr. Murad said that Jordan's participation in the fair, which ends on Sept. 10, stems from Jordan's keenness to enhance trade and economic ties with Syria.

A total of 35 Jordanian industrial businesses are taking part in the fair displaying samples of their products and investment services.

According to Mr. Murad, the balance of trade is currently in favour of Syria which last year sold Jordan JD99 million worth of

Syrian goods in exchange for JD 41 million worth of Jordanian products. Among the main Jordanian exports to Syria are cement, phosphate, aluminium, paper, chemicals, plastics, drugs, and pipes. The main Syrian products exported to Jordan include barley, garments, raw cotton, chick peas, carpets and bed sheets.

In a bid to adjust the balance of trade between the two countries, Mr. Murad said the federation is demanding that more diversified Jordanian products be exported to Syria especially white cement, drugs, textile and paper products.

He said the federation will pursue efforts for encouraging joint Jordanian-Syrian ventures, based on raw materials found in the two countries, and will seek to orient the private sectors in both countries on investment opportunities, the organisation of trade fairs and boosting cooperation between the federations of chambers of industry and trade in Jordan and Syria.

He added that the federation's visit to Damascus was in response to an invitation by Rabeah Shallah, the head of the Syrian Federation of Chambers of Trade.

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The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	AUD	HKD	SGD
US Dollar	1.0000	1.8462	0.8301	1.5189	117.48	1.3937	1.0125	2.0800	6.2235
DE Mark	0.5417	1.0000	0.3410	0.6221	63.63	0.7544	0.7405	1.1257	3.3662
GB Sterling	1.5670	2.9315	1.0000	2.4113	188.33	2.2118	2.0607	3.3031	9.8842
CH Franc	0.6594	1.2142	0.4141	1.0000	77.23	0.8168	1.1351	1.3727	4.0628
JP Yen	0.0085	1.5711	0.5357	1.2927	1.0000	1.1858	1.532	1.7688	5.2957
CA Dollar	0.7175	1.3305	0.4505	1.0944	1.19	1.0000	1.2955	1.4878	4.4812
IT Lira	0.0008	1.0251	0.3498	0.0843	1538.16	0.7736	1.154	3.4545	10.3628
NL Guilder	0.4806	0.8830	0.3029	0.7308	56.48	0.5704	0.6812	1.0029	2.8829
FR Franc	0.1607	0.2967	0.1012	0.24094	18.85	0.2239	0.3341	0.334100	1.0000

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	AUD	HKD	SGD
US Dollar	1.0000	1.8462	0.8301	1.5189	117.48	1.3937	1.0125	2.0800	6.2235
Jordan Dinar	1.4124	2.7080	3.7506	0.3770	3.6400	0.3053	3.6728	1.536.00	3.3850
Saudi Riyal	0.2668	0.1888	0.2675	0.5325	5.1412	0.4311	5.1878	2.172.32	4.7611
Bahrain Dinar	2.85	1.8781	0.9491	0.1005	0.97	0.0814	0.98	410.07	0.9025
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1945	0.10304	0.10304	0.0839	1.01	422.53	0.9299	0.9299
Kuwait Dinar	3.2780	2.3194	1.22870	1.22870	1.182	12.03	5038.49	0.9299	0.9299
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1928	0.10212	0.10212	0.9911	0.0831	1.01	418.75	0.9216
Lebanese L1000	0.65	0.4603	2.4398	0.2491	2.3987	0.1988	2.3880	1.0000	2.2009
Egyptian	0.2954	0.2092	1.1080	0.1114	1.0753	0.0902	1.0850	454.36	1.0000

Energy			Mid-East Currencies					
Oil	Last	Period	Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	¥
Brent	18.99	19.17	SA Riyal	0.2668	0.4926	0.1679	0.4054	31.336
W. Texas	20.14	20.04	AE Dirham	0.2723	0.5033	0.1715	0.4141	31.992
Bonny	18.99	19.17	KW Dinar	3.2760	6.0503	2.0631	4.9801	384.81
Dubai	17.60	17.70	BH Dinar	0.3770	4.9021	1.8706	4.0339	317.72
Lib. Gas	217.00	213.00	CY Pound	1.8395	3.3837	1.1573	2.7918	215.99

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

RSS study: Half of Jordan's industrial investment is unjustified and unfeasible

A STUDY prepared by the Royal Scientific Society on the degree of competitiveness of industrial products has shown that half of Jordan's industrial investment is an unjustified and unfeasible investment due to the inactivity of available production capabilities to the Jordanian industries. The study noted that utilised production capacity of the Jordanian industries included in the survey does not exceed 53 per cent of the overall available production capacity.

According to the study, the medium and small-size industries are more viable for the Jordanian economy especially under the present circumstances of high unemployment and limited financial resources. It indicated that large industries, except the mining ones, depend to a great extent on imported inputs and production elements and as such, are threatened not to be able to get a certificate of origin which requires at least 40 per cent of local value added input. "These industries are not able to achieve this rate," the study said.

"The small industries in all sectors, except those in the chemical sphere, are all secure once Jordan joins the World Trade Organisation or signs any partnership agreement with any country or group of other countries," the study emphasised.

It pointed out that the number of industries which have acquired the certificate of quality did not exceed 13 per cent of all the institutions included in the study. The industries carrying the certificates are mostly large ones.

An additional finding was a noticeable decline in the level of wages in the industrial sector. This aspect reflects on the productivity of the workforce and limits its creativity, the study said.

Other problems according to the industrialists are the shortages of financing, the small size of the local market, the high prices of production inputs, the competition of foreign products and the stiff competition in the local market (Al Dustour).

Jordan Cement Company awards contracts to ABB

THE JORDAN Cement Factories Company has awarded ABB Industry A.G. of Switzerland and ABB Near East of Jordan a contract to supply, install and commission a "state of the art" control system for the company's sixth production line at Fuhais. The objective of the project is to improve the environmental aspects by upgrading the efficiency of the control system of the equipment. This will minimise the sudden stoppages of the machines in the production line and consequently minimise the dust emission of the stacks.

Also a great consideration was taken to improve the control system of the air filters in order to improve the environmental quality of its facilities to conform to the most rigorous international standards. As a result it will contribute to better environmental conditions in the surroundings. ABB have also modernised the control system of fifth production line last year (J.T.).

Government decides to allow imports of mineral water

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Trade, Industry and Supply Hani Mulki Monday announced that the government has decided to open the door for importing mineral water from Arab and foreign countries.

Speaking at a meeting with members of the Amman Chamber of Industry (ACI), Dr. Mulki said the decision will be effective by the end of this year. In the meeting, which was also attended by ACI President Khalid Abu Hammad, several issues of concern to the private and industrial sectors were discussed.

The minister said the decision to import mineral water aims at pushing Jordanian companies to improve their

production of such products and to compete with foreign companies, particularly after Jordan joins the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

The ACI objected to the government decision, saying that such a decision will inflict heavy losses on the Jordanian industries.

"There are five Jordanian factories which produce mineral water. Their total capital is JD4 million and they employ more than 1,500 workers," ACI pointed out. "The production costs of mineral water in neighbouring Arab countries is far less than in Jordan."

ACI sources said that even the industrial companies were shocked by the government decision to raise water charges

from 100 fils to 250 fils as that will adversely affect the costs, the production and the capability to compete foreign products.

In reply to a question on whether Jordan will take part in the Doha economic conference, the minister said that Jordan approves unanimous decisions. "If there is an Arab unanimous decision to hold the Doha conference on time and if the Arabs want to attend we will do so," said Dr. Mulki.

Regarding Jordan-Iraq economic ties, the minister said: "It is premature to talk about increasing the volume of trade between Jordan and Iraq. Jordan will take part in the Baghdad international exhibition if it is invited."

Seminar assesses drug industry in Arab World

AMMAN (Petra) — Seventy delegates representing pharmaceutical industrial firms in the Arab World Monday opened a three-day symposium focusing on the prospects of Arab pharmaceutical industry and problems impeding its progress.

Organised by the Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation (JIEC), the Arab Union of Scientific and Research Councils (AUSRC), and the Higher Council of Science and Technology (HCST), the meeting is slated to review working papers presented by Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Sudan and Algeria dealing with the situation and future prospects of the Arab drug industries, elements for its success and the quality of Arab drugs.

The papers also cover modern trends in the pharmaceutical industry and their impact on the Arab drug industry, the employment of herbs in the manufacture of drugs, the intellectual property rights in relations to Jordan's drug industry and the prospects for this industry in the coming century.

Addressing the opening session, AUSRC Secretary General Taha Nueimi said despite the advances made in the Arab pharmaceutical field, this industry still faces numerous problems which require study and analysis so that the Arab drugs can become truly competitive with the drugs manufactured by other nations.

This symposium, Mr. Nueimi said, aims at focusing attention on the raw materials found in the Arab countries and the need for research to be done to benefit from these materials in the drug industry and to orient Arab experts on current developments in the world drug manufacturing industry.

JIEC Director General Amer Majali told the meeting that the Sahab Industrial City, near Amman, houses 22 pharmaceutical plants, which have a collective capital of nearly JD50 million, producing human and veterinary medicines, medical equipment and other materials covering a major portion of the Kingdom's needs and exporting a surplus of their production.

He said that the drug industries in Jordan have reached a high quality level as it is totally committed to internationally accepted standards and specifications enabling them to compete with foreign products in world markets.

An exhibition of drugs and medical appliances organised by Jordanian firms was opened at Sahab on the sidelines of the symposium.

Jordan offers majority stake in airport hotel

AMMAN (R) — Jordan's state investment arm is offering foreign investors a 70 per cent stake in a 314-room transit hotel at the country's main international airport, officials said Monday.

"We are offering Alia Gateway Hotel... what is needed is finding investors in the tourism sector to buy Jordan Investment Corporation's 70 per cent share of the hotel," Mohammed Batayneh, Jordan Investment Corporation's (JIC) director general, told Reuters.

Mr. Batayneh said the hotel's remaining shares are owned by the state carrier Royal Jordanian (RJ) which is also embarking on a piecemeal privatisation of some of its peripheral operations.

The hotel, which is sited within the compound of the Amman International Airport nearly 25 kilometres (16 miles) south of the capital, is built on state-owned property under a renewable 30-year lease.

The airport hotels company which owns the hotel has a paid up capital of 14.5 million dinars (\$20.5 million).

Under the terms of reference of the sale, bidders should submit detailed offers no later than September 30, 1997.

Government officials say they plan to speed up sale of state assets, including holdings in cement and telecommunications as part of a privatisation drive needed to advance economic reforms.

Saudi policy to encourage barley self-sufficiency

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia is committed to its policy of encouraging self-sufficiency in barley production, the agriculture minister was quoted Monday as saying. The official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) quoted Agriculture and Water Resources Minister Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz Ben Muammar as saying self-sufficiency was vital "due to the large importance of making feed available for animals."

Saudi Arabia is the world's number one barley importer, with traders expecting imports of five to six million tonnes in 1997.

Scarce water resources in the desert kingdom limit the amount of barley that is grown locally. The five-year development plan to the year 2000 targets a cut in water usage, particularly in agriculture, which consumes about 90 per cent of all water used in Saudi Arabia.

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ORGANISED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 25/08/1997										
PART 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P/E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF TRANSACTIONS	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	
298.000	221.250	ARAB BANK	13.4	1.37	6	1160	328730	292.50	292.00	-0.50
N 2.340	1.680	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	8.2	0.00	15	15250	29913	1.96	1.97	+0.01
1.600	1.260	BANK OF JORDAN	6.4	0.00	4	750	2288	3.07	3.05	-0.02
2.480	2.150	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	8.4	7.42	5	10550	25195	2.29	2.28	-0.01
1.280	1.000	THE HOUSING BK.	14.2	4.08	1431	1431	1995	4.76	4.75	-0.01
4.180	2.440	JOR. KUWAIT BANK	31.1	0.00	9	2570	7960	3.03	3.12	+0.09
4.050	3.480	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	16.0	1.05	48	48205	189260	3.87	3.93	+0.06
2.440	1.800	REIT AL-KAL (REITMA)	14.8	14.85	5	3950	3990	1.02	1.01	-0.01
BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 218.02 CHNG: -0.02										
2.230	1.590	JOR FRENCH INSUR.	5.0	8.47	4	1200	2121	1.76	1.77	+0.01
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 114.57 CHNG: +0.05										
1.820	1.510	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	8.1	5.95	6	3150	5291	1.67	1.68	+0.01
1.940	1.320	IBRD ELECTRICITY	14.0	8.22	2	200	370	1.94	1.85	-0.09
1.010	0.820	REAL ESTATE INV.	12.8	6.52	4	15600	15102	0.92	0.92	-
1.870	1.150	MID. EAST HOTELS	19.7	0.00	1	500	645	1.29	1.29	-
1.720	1.290	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	9.0	0.00	10	2100	7838	1.34	1.45	+0.11
1.220	0.930	ZARCA EDUCATION	9	0.00	4	2075	2091	1.02	1.02	-
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 112.60 CHNG: +0.74										
4.450	3.220	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	26.0	2.85	27	63531	244651	3.88	3.86	-0.02
7.050	5.200	ARAB POTASH	14.0	0.33	3	450	1725	6.00	6.00	-
10.250	9.070	JOR. PETROL REFINERY	9.9	0.73	14	730	7426	10.16	10.18	+0.02
3.260	1.650	INDUSTRIAL CORN. AG.	9	0.00	4	650	1125	1.81	1.72	-0.09
4.250	3.940	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	11.3	4.87	16	4179	17160	4.11	4.11	-
1.800	1.290	JOR. PIPES MANUFACT.	15.7	6.30	5	794	1017	1.30	1.27	-0.03
1.530	1.050	RAJTA INDUSTRIES	9	0.00	1	200	228	1.15	1.14	-0.01
5.650	4.300	DAR ALADAM DV. INV.	13.2	6.65	4	1624	8735	5.38	5.38	-
3.850	2.850	ARAB ALUM. IND.	5.3	11.11	3	525	1179	2.28	2.25	-0.03
1.960	1.500	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	9.7	0.00	3	1350	621	0.47	0.46	-0.01
1.290	1.000	JOR. PAPER CORP. TRD.	31.8	0.00	11	12000	12480	1.04	1.04	-
1.200	0.910	INTERVED. PETRO. CORP.	9	0.00	3	2500	1400	0.57	0.56	-0.01
1.940	1.520	JOR. ROCKWELL IND.	9	0.00	5	3250	2143	0.65	0.66	+0.01
2.980	1.520	UNIV. CHEM. IND.	14.2	6.37	2	200	315	1.58	1.57	-0.01
3.000	2.130	MUTUAL CABLE WIRE. NPAC	33.7	0.00	2	200	420	2.17	2.10	-0.07
1.920	1.530	JOR. SULPHUR CORP.	9	0.00	6	10250	6050	0.60	0.60	-
1.670	1.120	ARAB PHARM. CHEN.	16.5	5.43	12	2250	2903	1.30	1.29	-0.01
1.970	1.080	UNIV. MOON. IND.	9	0.00	12	12000	15378	1.27	1.25	-0.02
1.510	1.040	JOR. INDUS. RESOURCES	12.6	10.64	3	1150	1077	0.94	0.94	-
1.070	0.810	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	15.6	0.00	7	3650	3103	0.85	0.85	-
2.090	2.340	RE - EAST READY WDR	52.8	0.00	2	5600	8250	1.48	1.50	+0.02
1.230	1.080	INTL. TOBACCO	6.6	0.00	20	18500	22243	1.20	1.21	+0.01
1.190	0.860	UNION CH. & VEG.	45.0	0.00	8	16500	16230	0.99	0.99	-
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 120.01 CHNG: -0.88										
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 163.79 CHNG: -0.30										
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 25/08/1997										
0.630	0.340	CENTRAL CHEN. STORAGE	9	0.00	2	2000	680	0.35	0.34	-0.01
0.660	0.400	JOR. TRADE PAC.	10.7	0.00	13	23100	9240	0.41	0.40	-0.01
N 0.950	0.540	JOR. PET. INV.	10	0.00	10	14650	8018	0.55	0.55	-
0.840	0.660	UNION INV. 501	9	0.00	1	500	100	0.70	0.70	-
0.570	0.370	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	9	0.00	25	41450	15778	0.39	0.38	-0.01
N 0.950	0.720	AL-DAMLIYAH 751	72.0	0.00	2	10050	8543	0.86	0.85	-0.01
0.480	0.300	JOR. INDUS. MACH. JENCO	9	0.00	8	9976	4979	0.74	0.75	+0.01
0.570	0.350	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	46.1	0.00	4	2950	400	0.26	0.25	-0.01
0.750	0.400	RAJTA MULT. ENG. HANICO	9	0.00	4	7500	3453	0.47	0.46	-0.01
0.820	0.710	JORDAN STEEL	36.8	6.49	5	3700	2849	0.77	0.77	-
0.710	0.580	KHAYAT PHARM. 751	9	0.00	7	15750	6143	0.64	0.64	-
1.190	0.860	UNION TOBACCO 751	9	0.00	3	2000	1525	1.01	1.02	+0.01
0.570	0.350	RAJTA PHARM. 851	9	0.00	4	3900	1789	0.60	0.61	+0.01
0.570	0.320	INDUS. ENG.	9	0.00	4	3000	990	0.33	0.33	-
0.860	0.720	INDUS. CERAMIC	18.9	0.00	1	500	360	0.72	0.72	-
0.820	0.710	INDUS. ALUMINUM 751	98.8	0.00	17	13800	6348	0.71	0.71	-
N 1.000	0.700	IND. EAST COMPLEX	7.5	16.39	4	1750	1068	0.61	0.61	-
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 121.58 CHNG: -0.30										

* New 12 months low
* Listed during the past 12 months
* P/E ratio is 100 or more
* Negative P/E
* Earnings is zero or N/A for the most recent year

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



"The boss tried to reduce our medical benefits, but kissing a boo-boo is considered sexual harassment."

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

WHASS

DUNBO

SIMDAL

YOGAVE

Answer here: AN

Yesterday's Jumbles: JETTY RUMMY THORAX TINKLE
Answer: What it took for the young man to invest in long term bonds - MATURITY

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Europeans uncover new swimming stars; Popov's back

SEVILLE (AP) — The western Australian city of Perth — host to the World Swimming Championships in January — better prepare for an Italian accent.

The name is Emiliano Brembilla and, though Alexander Popov charmed Seville and reclaimed his place as the world's fastest in the water, the 19-year-old Italian was the find of the 12-day European Swimming Championships that ended Sunday.

For the first time in memory, distance swimming may not belong to Australia. Brembilla — fourth in both distance events a year ago in Atlanta — swam the third fastest time ever (3 minutes 45.96 seconds) to win the 400 freestyle and added another world's top time this season in taking the 1,500 (14:58.65).

"I would say I have become used to a very long training day," said Brembilla, renowned for putting in 20 kilometres daily — a schedule he was put on by his former French coach Douchan-Jean Le Kabec. The other relatively new name was Hungarian 16-year-old Agnes Kovacs, the surprise 200 backstroke bronze medalist in Atlanta and a young star with model-like looks to replace the now-retired Kristina Egerszegi.

Kovacs, coached by Lazlo Kiss who also trained Egerszegi, won the 200 breaststroke in a new European record of 2:24.90 — just .14 off tying the world record of Australian Rebecca Brown. Her winning 100 time (1:08.02) was the second quickest in the world this year.

As for the 25-year-old Popov, he's back where he was a year ago after being stabbed in a melee with a Moscow watermelon vendor. His winning times in the 50 (22.30) and 100 (49.09) are the quickest in The World this year. He also picked up two more golds in relays.

"I don't know if I'm back, let's say I'm still in training for Perth," said Popov, who's learned to spin off clever quotes but still can be quite brusque with reporters and autograph seekers.

He called the 100 win his best technical race in 2 1/2 years, though later he swam slightly faster (49.02) leading off the 4x100 Relay.

Then there was triple Olympic gold medalist Michelle Smith.

Entered under the surname of her husband, Erik De Bruin, she won two gold (400 IM and 200 freestyle) and two sil-

ver (400 freestyle And 200 butterfly), but didn't swim particularly fast in any of them. The questions about drugs that dogged her in Atlanta were all but absent in the Euros, a much more low-key meet. She also threatened to leave if there were too many.

She said she's planning to file libel suits in a few days against three Irish newspapers and on in Britain and is vague about what she'll swim in Perth, when she'll be 28.

"When I first came here I didn't know what I was going to swim," said Smith, who swam her first 200 freestyle in a major meet.

"There were probably seven events I could have won medals in, I chose four," she added.

For Perth, I can't say what it will be."

Spain said hello to a new name and good-bye to an old one.

Nineteen-year-old Spaniard Maria Pelaez beat Smith in the 200 butterfly in a quick 2:10.25 — No. 10 on the all-time European list behind mostly swimmers from the former East Germany.

"That may have been my 15 minutes of fame," said Pelaez.

Martin Lopez-Zubero, 28, the Florida-born Spaniard and the country's best swimmer ever with Olympic and world gold, won the 100 backstroke for his fifth European gold and then said it might have been his last race. It's 50-50 he'll go to Perth and swim his last.

There were no world records, possibly held back by stifling heat in southern Spain that reached 40 C almost on cue daily as the late afternoon finals were held.

Besides Popov, Smith and Kovacs, the only other swimmers to win two individual golds were Alexander Goukov of Belarus in both breaststrokes and Marcel Wouda of the Netherlands in the 200 and 400 IM.

Germany won the most overall medals with 35 and 15 gold, still reaping the benefits of the former East German Trove of talent and coaching. Russia topped the gold list with 16 in the 52 events that included swimming, water polo, diving and synchronised swimming. Italy and Hungary were next with four golds each.

Hungary picked up its first European water polo title in 20 years with a 3-2 win over Yugoslavia.

Capello tells hooligans to stay home

MILAN (AFP) — AC Milan coach Fabio Capello launched an appeal on Monday for an end to hooliganism in Italian football.

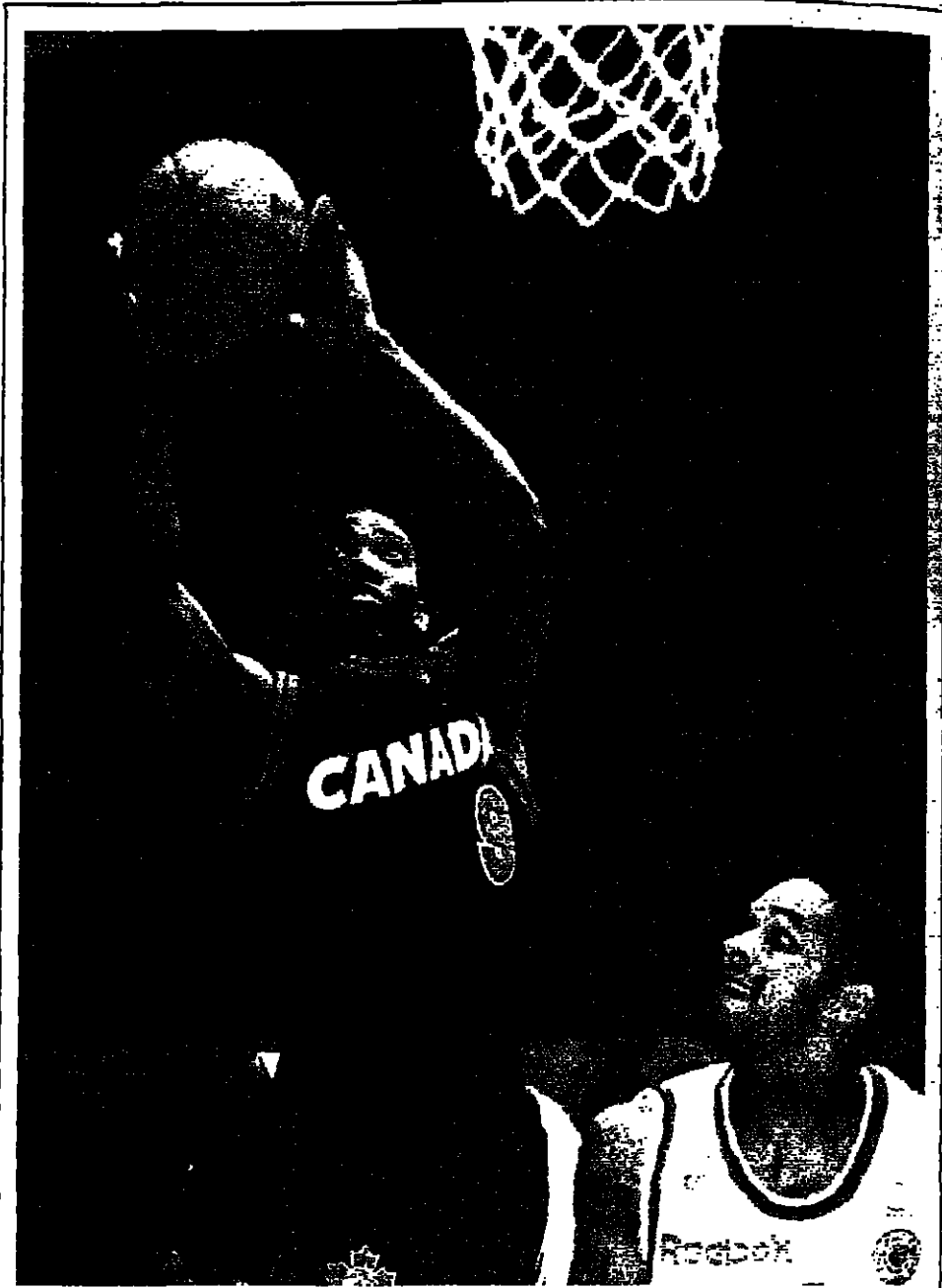
Capello, returning here after a year with Real Madrid, called for a more civilised, Spanish-style approach from the fans when the new Serie A season starts on Sunday.

"What I miss is the enthusiasm and the civilised behaviour at Spanish football grounds," he said.

"I never saw lines of security people protecting the entrance to the players' dressing rooms and you don't need to hide the team bus during away matches — you can leave it right in the middle of the crowds outside and nobody's going to throw rocks at it."

"The grounds are all full, with young men and women, and families."

"And I'd like to see all that this season here in Italy. I'd like a football match here to finally be just a celebration of sport, a joyful happening."



Canadian player Rowan Barret shoots for a score over the defence of Venezuela's Richard Medina, August 24. Canada and Venezuela are playing in the qualifying round for the World Championship to be played in Greece in 1998 (Reuters photo)

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Benfica head for the city

LISBON (AFP) — Top Portuguese outfit Benfica are set for a flotation both on the Lisbon bourse and on the London Stock Exchange, Diario Economico reported here on Monday. Finibanco and Salomon Brothers will place the shares on both exchanges, the paper reported. Under the flotation proposals, which will be put to club members in late September, members and their associates will hold a majority capital stake in the new society. Benfica's move to float underlines a growing trend in football, with around a dozen British clubs already quoted on the various London markets. Italian sides are also looking to get in on the act, with Lazio and Napoli set to seek a listing in London later this year.

Maradona on the mark

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) — Argentine veteran Diego Maradona made a successful return to action on Sunday when he scored a penalty in Boca Juniors' 4-2 win over Argentinos Juniors. Maradona, making his comeback after some ten months out and well-documented drugs problems, was on target in the 61st minute of his side's win over the club with whom he began his playing days. The 36-year-old, who led Argentina to the 1986 World Cup and had spells with Barcelona and Napoli, signed for Argentinian side Boca Juniors for the third time last April. Maradona's recent career has been dogged by his self-confessed cocaine addiction. He was sent home from the 1994 World Cup after testing positive for doping and spent several weeks in a Swiss clinic last winter in an attempt to beat the habit. Towards the end of the match, Maradona began arguing with the referee and afterwards was picked for an anti-doping control, a choice he saw as not entirely coincidental. "For a change they picked me. They were holding up the No. 10 (Maradona's shirt number)."

Italian player loses fight for life

ROME (AFP) — Italian basketball player Davide Ancilotto, who had been in a coma after collapsing during a tournament match last week, died in hospital here late Sunday night. Ancilotto, who had been in intensive care since being rushed to Rome's San Filippo Neri hospital on August 16, suffered a cardiac arrest shortly before midnight. The 23-year-old had collapsed after suffering a loss of blood supply to the brain during the match between Italian club Telemarket and French side Nancy at Gubbio, near Perugia in central Italy.

Soccer flips as crazy goalies go on the offensive

By Phil Minshall

LONDON — The rest of the world has christened them loco — Spanish for crazy — but to soccer fans in Latin America they are heroes.

These goalkeepers are beginning to win renown in sports pages around the world for their daredevil exploits and, in some cases, outstanding talent.

The father of the present breed of crazy goalkeepers was Hugo Gatti. He played in the Argentine first division from 1962 to 1988 and won 18 national caps. He became famous for his Bermuda shorts and headband and for his equally colourful sprints up the field with the ball at his feet.

His career did not start auspiciously. He let in four goals, including one lobbed over his head when he was well off his line. He left the stadium in the back of a car with a blanket over his head.

But his club stuck by him and he became a firm favourite with soccer-mad Argentinians.

"I feel sorry for goalkeepers who live under the posts. They don't know what they are missing!" Gatti once said.

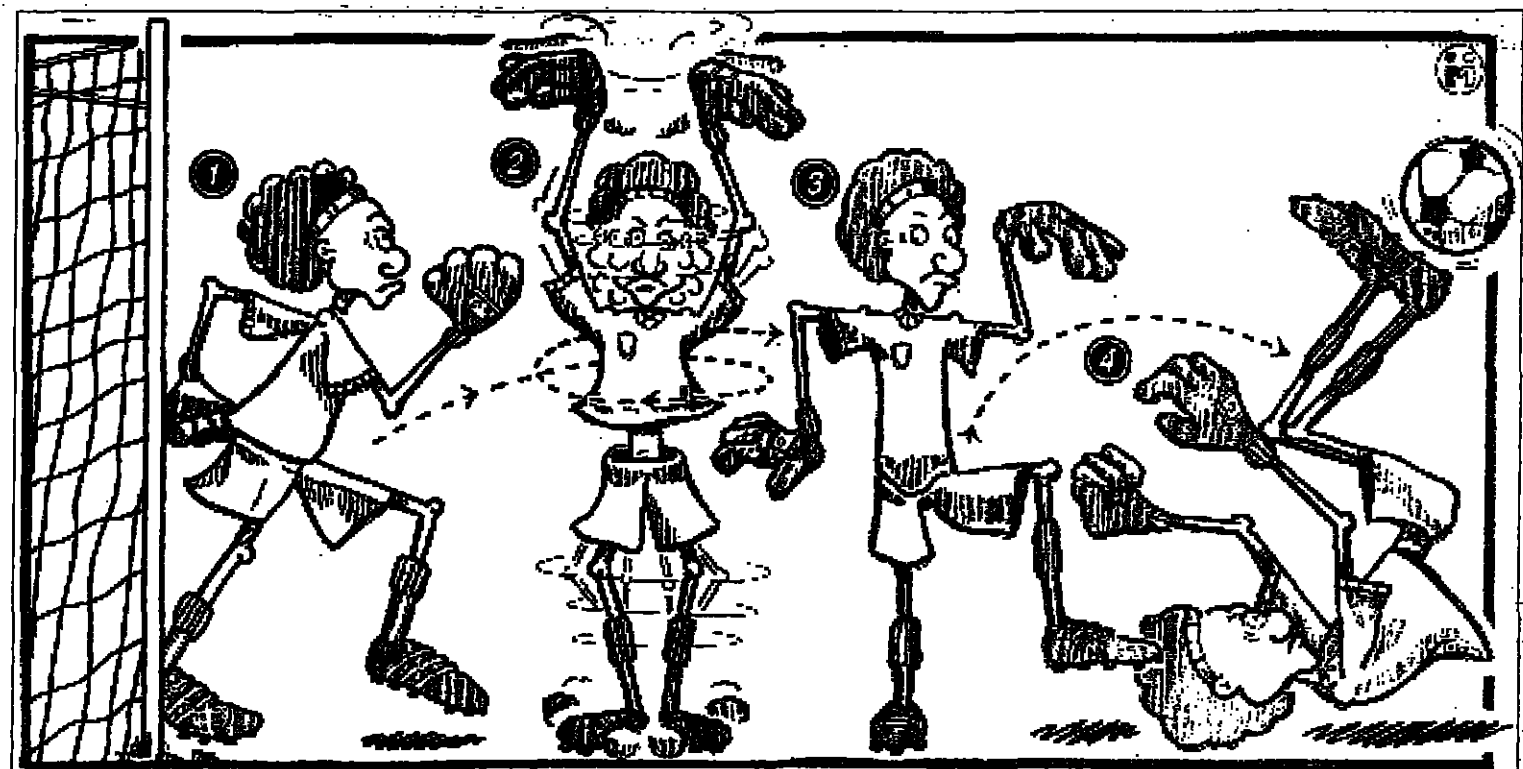
He won all his caps under Argentina's World Cup-winning manager Carlos Luis Menotti and would have played in the famous 1978 side but for injury.

In Menotti, Gatti found a rare manager prepared to tolerate his eccentricities. "Nowadays a goalie is an extra player who can control the ball with his feet and hit accurate passes," Menotti replied when asked why he continued to select El Loco.

Since Gatti's retirement there have been plenty of players queuing up to inherit his mantle, not least of whom has been the Colombian keeper, Rene Higuita. His tight shorts and paunch would make him stand out even in a local park game. He also stands out for preferring to dribble the ball upfield rather than kick it over the half-way line.

In 1989, he scored in two

A goalkeeper's job is to keep the ball out of the net. But a new generation of Latin American number ones have redefined the role, reports Gemini News Service, by jostling with their own strikers to get their names on the score sheet.



Lessons in Loco motion: Four easy steps to new-wave goalkeeping

internationals and, at the other end, his spectacular saves helped Colombia to qualify for the second World Cup finals the following year.

However, his eccentricity also helped seal their exit from that competition when he mistimed a tackle on the Cameroon legend, Roger Milla, who went on to score the decisive goal.

Time has not mellowed Higuita. Last year he stunned the soccer world by unleashing his "scorpion kick", on England's home ground, Wembley.

He dived forward under a shot — striking the ball in mid-air with his heels and knocking it back upfield. After the match, he admitted he had long been practising the spectacular stunt.

When Higuita has scored for Colombia it has usually been in friendlies. But more goalkeepers' shooting skills are

now being trusted when it matters.

In last year's World Cup qualifier between Argentina and Paraguay, the latter's goalkeeper, Jose Luis Chilavert, scored from the penalty spot to secure a 1-1 draw. For the luckless Argentine keeper, German Burgos, it was the second time in a week that he had conceded a goal to Chilavert, who plays his league football in Argentina for South American club champions Velez Sarsfield.

On the previous occasion, Chilavert had beaten Burgos with a tremendous free kick from almost the half-way line. In his three-and-a-half years at Velez Sarsfield, Chilavert, who wears a black jersey with a snarling bulldog on it, has scored 12 goals. His solid record between the posts also won him recognition as the world's top goalkeeper last season and Argentina's club

player of the year.

Not to be outdone, Venezuela's Rafael Dudamel scored from open play last October in a World Cup qualifier, yet again against Argentina. Perhaps Dudamel should have concentrated his efforts in defence, as his team lost 5-2.

The eagerness of South American goalkeepers to get their name on the score sheet has become even more contagious this year. Barely a week goes by without news of another one scoring in the top flight of Argentine and Brazilian soccer — two of the best leagues on the continent.

Most are from penalties or free kicks. But in February, Guarani, high fliers in the Brazilian league, clinched a crucial 3-3 draw with defending champions Palmeiras when keeper Gomez headed home a last-minute goal.

However, Gomez, Chilavert,

Dudamel and the rest still have some way to go to emulate the flamboyant Mexican Jorge Campos. He is still the only man in modern international football to start a game as a goalkeeper and at half time change into a number nine shirt and join the strike force.

Nowadays, instead of wearing the lurid goalkeeping strip that made him a favourite, Campos wears the same kit as his team-mates in order to move forward and create havoc in his opponents' half.

Not all Latin American goalkeepers have the urge to wander far from their penalty area. "I'm not thinking about it (scoring goals). I prefer to stay in my goal," says the Brazilian incumbent, Carlos Germano.

But nowadays, Germano is becoming the exception to the rule as Latino goalies go loco

— Gemini News.

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CINEMA TEL:634144
PHILADELPHIA "2"
Jim Carrey ... in
LIAR LIAR
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:699238
PLAZA
Tom Bringer ... in
THE SUBSTITUTE
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:677420
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Arnold Schwarzenegger ... in BATMAN & ROBIN
(12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30)
CONCORD "2"
ACE VENTURA 1
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Hamburger Sportverein's (HSV) Sven Knetsch and Bayern Munich's Thomas Helmer (R) fight for the ball during their German first league soccer match in Hamburg, August 24. Bayern Munich won the match 2-0 (Reuters photo)

Schalcken shocks Rios

BOSTON (AFP) — Unseeded Sjeng Schalcken of the Netherlands shocked second seed Marcelo Rios of Chile 7-5, 6-3 here late Sunday to win the \$328,000 ATP championship here.

Schalcken came through in style to claim his third career victory after considering pulling out of the event a week ago with a knee injury.

"It's the greatest week of my career," beamed the 20-year-old, ranked 79 in the world.

Both players dropped their opening service games before games went with serve until Schalcken secured the opening set 7-5 with a backhand winner and a Rios double fault.

"I served well today and didn't allow him to get into his rhythm," Schalcken said. "Winning the first set was important. Afterwards all the pressure was on him."

Schalcken, who won the ATP title two years ago in Valencia and last year's event in Jakarta, knocked out both top seeds on the way to his latest triumph, having beaten world number six Alex Corretja of Spain in the quarter-finals before ending Rios' hopes.

Bomb damages stadium planned for Olympics use

GOETEBORG, Sweden (AP) — A powerful bomb rocked the main sports stadium in this western Swedish city early Monday, the latest in a series of attacks that have jeopardized the country's bid for the Olympics in the year 2004.

Police said the bomb exploded about 2 a.m. (0000 GMT) and no one was injured. The blast went off at an entrance to the new Ullevi Stadium and a roof section was badly damaged.

Plans call for the Goeteborg Stadium to be used as a site for Olympic soccer competition, if Stockholm is awarded the summer Games.

But the latest attack raised new questions about Stockholm's bid. "We are now concentrating on the vote in Lausanne and we aren't changing that plan," said Goeran Laangsvad, the chairman of the Stockholm Olympics Candidacy Committee.

"What happened in Goeteborg is unfortunate, but doesn't change our plans."

There were no suspects and no claims of responsibility in the bombing, police spokesman Bengt Staaf said.

But Swedish television SVT reported that an anonymous caller to the Stockholm newspaper Aftonbladet warned shortly before the explosion that a bomb was about to go off, but gave no indications of when or where.

It was the ninth attack on a sports facility in Sweden since the spring. All of the others have taken place in the Stockholm area.

On August 8, a bomb destroyed parts of the 85-year-old Olympic Stadium in Stockholm. A shadowy extremist group claimed responsibility for that attack, complaining that hosting the Olympics would be a misuse of public money.

The International Olympic Committee votes on a site for the 2004 Summer Games on September 5, and Stockholm is one of the candidate cities. The attacks and bombings have unsettled the IOC.

Staaf, asked whether there was a connection between the Stockholm attacks and the Goeteborg bombing, replied: "Yes, you can certainly think that."

The stadium, with a capacity of 45,000, was the site of the 1995 track and field world championships. Goeteborg, about 400 kilometres southwest of Stockholm, is Sweden's second-largest city with about 450,000 people.

The other candidate countries seeking the 2004 Olympics are Rome, Athens, Greece, Buenos Aires, Argentina, and South Africa.

Rusedski is British No. 1 in new rankings

PARIS (AFP) — Greg Rusedski climbed three places to a career high of 20 to take over as the official British No. 1 ahead of Tim Henman in the latest ATP world rankings published Monday.

Rusedski, 23, squeezed into the top 20 to climb above Henman by just 42 points as Henman slipped back one place to 21.

Henman ousted his Canadian-born rival as Britain's best on April 29, 1996, but Rusedski gained 50 points to go to 1,601 after reaching the quarter-finals of the ATP Tour event in Boston last week in a welcome boost as he goes into the U.S. Open.

The 22-year-old Henman, inactive last week, dropped to 1,559 after losing 57 points which he had collected from the Toronto tournament in the corresponding week last year.

Henman is under further pressure as he strikes to emulate

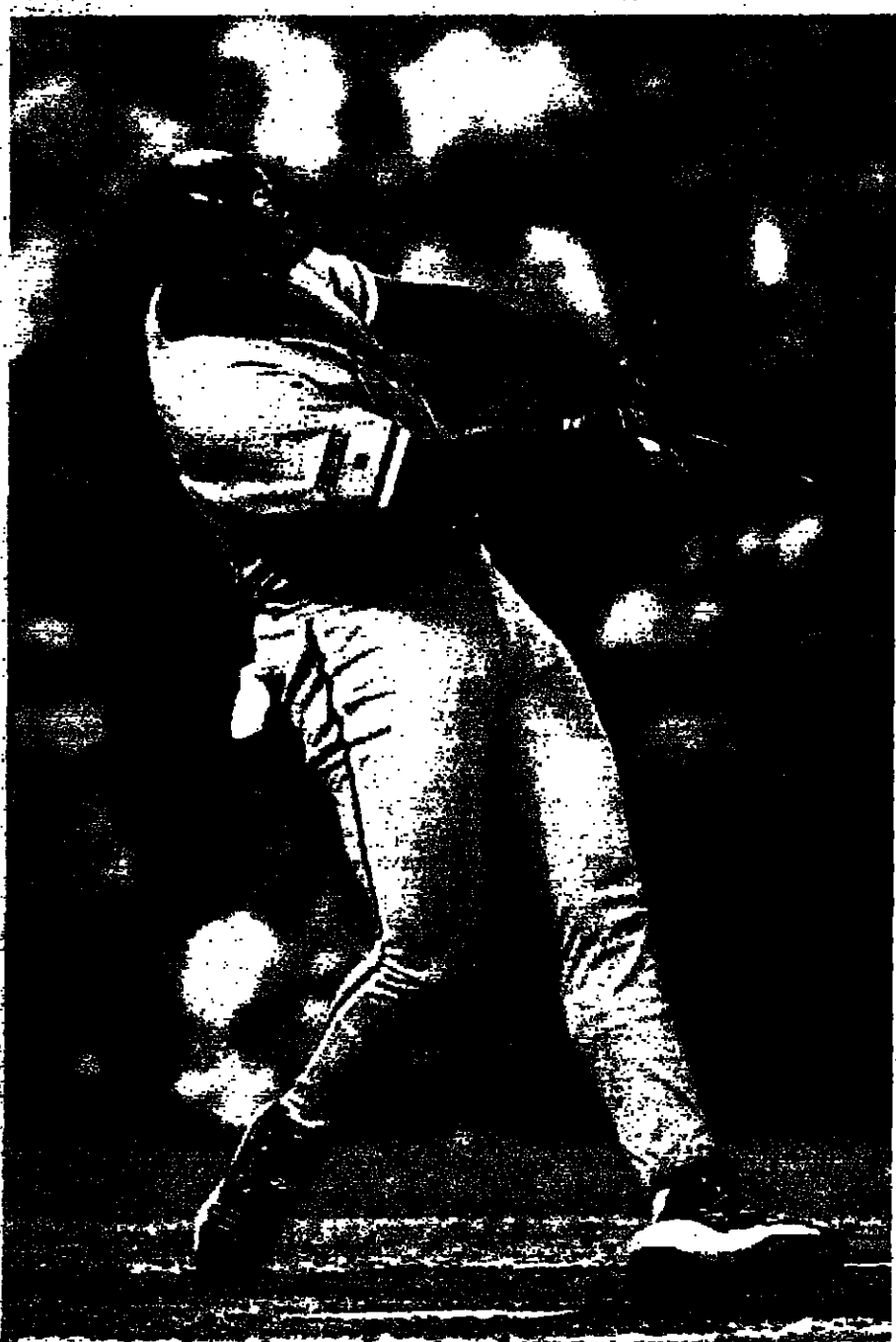
last year's performance at Flushing Meadow, where he pocketed 130 points after reaching the last 16.

Should he lose early on this time round — he faces fifth seed Thomas Muster of Austria in the first round — he could drop still further in the world rankings.

Rusedski, in contrast, with an opening match against American David Wheaton, has no points to lose, having been beaten in the first round last year.

Aside from Rusedski, Carlos Moya profited from his triumph in Long Island, rising from 8th to 6th to become Spanish number one.

But Dutchman Sjeng Schalcken registered the biggest jump of the week after winning in Boston at the weekend, where he eliminated top seed Alex Corretja and Albert Costa of Spain before beating second seed Marcelo Rios of Chile in the final. Schalcken rocketed 32 places from 79th to 47th.



Chicago White Sox Frank Thomas breaks his bat on a pitch from Texas Rangers' Rick Helling in the third inning of play. Thomas lined the ball toward third and was out on the play as the ball was caught on the fly (Reuters photo)

NFL season live on Orbit-ESPN

Orbit's premium 24-hour sports channel, Orbit-ESPN Sports will be bringing its viewers live coverage of the National Football League season and post season games.

NFL fans can tune into two games a week live starting on Sunday, August 31 at midnight when the Carolina Panthers come up against the Washington Redskins. The build-up to the second game starts on Monday, September 1 at 11:30 p.m. GMT with NFL Prime Monday followed by Super Bowl winners the Green Bay Packers against the Chicago Bears at 1:00 a.m. GMT.

Orbit-ESPN Sports will air live coverage of NFL post-season and live and satellite exclusive Super Bowl XXXII from San Diego on Sunday, January 25, 1998. 1997 NFL's September schedule on Orbit-ESPN Sports

September 9 01:00 Kansas City — Oakland
September 15 00:00 NY Jets — New England
September 16 01:00 Philadelphia — Dallas
September 22 00:00 Miami — Tampa Bay
September 23 01:00 Pittsburgh — Jacksonville
September 29 00:00 Philadelphia — Minnesota
September 30 01:00 San Francisco — Carolina

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The C4 team of Belarus celebrates their gold medal win at the World Canoeing Championships in Dartmouth. The team members, Alexandre Masseikov, Andrei Beliaev, Anatoli Reneiski, and Vladimir Merinov won in 35.849 seconds (Reuters photo)

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TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran's new foreign minister, Kamal Kharazi, said Monday that he was open to any meetings with his European Union (EU) counterparts in a bid to improve strained relations.

"We have no problem in meeting," Mr. Kharazi said when asked about the possibility of meeting with a troika of EU foreign ministers on the sidelines of a U.N.'s General Assembly meeting in New York.

"We have not yet received such a proposal, but we have no problem in meeting them," Mr. Kharazi said in his first comments on troubled EU relations since becoming foreign minister last week under Iran's new moderate president, Mohammad Khatami.

German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel said last week that he hoped for a new start in relations between the EU and Iran after the new government was formed in Tehran.

"There is a possibility for a new start in the relationship between EU nations and Iran," said Mr. Kinkel, adding that the European Union was ready for talks.

Relations between the EU and Tehran soured after EU members recalled their ambassadors when a Berlin court ruled in April that top Iranian leaders were linked to the 1992 murder of four Kurdish Iranian dissidents in Germany.

Former Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani said earlier this month that some EU envoys could return to Tehran but not the German ambassador, but Mr. Kinkel said discrimination against some ambassadors was unacceptable.

"Iran is responsible for 'Mykonos,' not we," said Kinkel, referring to the Greek restaurant in Berlin, where the Kurdish Iranians were gunned down five years ago.

TEHRAN (R) — An Iranian newspaper said Monday the U.S. should stop its "bankrupt" charges against Iran before the Islamic Republic could agree to talks with Washington.

The Tehran Times daily, seen as closely reflecting the view of Iran's foreign ministry, listed four conditions which were "sacrosanct...and stated over and over again for nearly two decades."

Washington had to "stop hostile words and deeds towards the Islamic Republic. Start understanding and respecting the Islamic revolution and its values. Stop baseless charges against Iran and

start releasing frozen Iranian assets in the United States," the paper said.

The new administration of Iran's President Mohammad Khatami, a moderate Shiite Muslim cleric, has given rise to speculation of a possible resumption of dialogue between the two arch-foes.

Washington and Tehran have had no diplomatic ties since 1980. Mr. Khatami was sworn into office August 4 after winning a landslide election victory last May.

Washington last week said it was willing to enter conditional talks with Iranian officials to discuss Tehran's opposition to the

Middle East peace process, its support of international terrorism and its desire for nuclear weapons.

"Old habits die hard. These bankrupt charges even fail to amuse fools," the Tehran Times said Monday.

Tehran has consistently denied these charges, saying that Washington and a strong Jewish lobby were trying to isolate Iran in order to sell arms to Iran's oil-rich Gulf Arab neighbours and justify its military presence in the region.

Reports that the U.S. showed willingness to discuss these topics have been met with derision in the Iranian media.

TEHRAN (R) — Just saying the word "America" can cause problems in Iran, even for local non-governmental groups seeking to promote understanding between people of the two countries.

The latest episode to highlight the sensitivity to the dreaded a-word has emerged from an invitation issued by an Iranian women's group for American women to come to the Islamic Republic.

Iran's women's solidarity association has invited five American women academics to the country — the first time since ties between the two countries were severed in 1980 — a source affiliated to the association said.

The association itself, although it is headed by a daughter of Iran's former President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, was reluctant in public to go as far as confirming that the visitors would indeed come from America.

"Following the willingness of five foreign women...to familiarise themselves with the real status of women in Iran, the women's solidarity association has invited them to come to Iran," a statement issued by the group said.

"The association regards this visit as an answer to the negative propaganda of the Western news media about Iranian women," the statement sent to Reuters said.

When asked to confirm that the invitation was for American women, a spokeswoman said, "all our information is in the statement."

Newspapers have reported that the visit would take place later this month.

The reluctance to go public on any form of ties with the U.S. is understandable in a political arena where conservatives and revolutionaries will denounce anyone wanting to edge towards the U.S.

Iran's new culture minister, Ataollah Mohajerani, was blasted by conservative deputies in parliament last week for advocating back in 1990 a resumption of talks with Washington.

The criticism for his earlier views nearly cost Mr. Mohajerani his new job in Iranian President Mohammad Khatami's cabinet as deputies threatened not to pass its necessary vote of confidence on the 43-year-old trained historian.

"America is the dreaded word here. When you use it, use it carefully," said one analyst.

Iran's media have also derided comments in the past days from the U.S. State Department that it would be willing to have conditional talks with Iranian officials on Tehran's opposition to the Middle East peace process and its alleged support of international terrorism and its desire for nuclear weapons.

Iran has repeatedly denied U.S. charges of terrorism and its media say Mr. Khatami's new administration does not mean a change in Tehran's stance towards Washington.

Iran accuses Washington of deliberately misrepresenting the Islamic republic to isolate Tehran.

For the time being it appears the only safe way to use the U.S. word is in the context of "Death to America," a regular chant at popular gatherings across Iran.

LARNACA (R) — A British woman and her boyfriend fled free Monday after being fined by a court for fabricating a rape claim.

The district court of Famagusta fined Susan Michelle Warburton; 30, and boyfriend Paul George Shearsmith, \$645 on charges of public mischief and conspiracy.

The two had pleaded guilty to the charge.

The couple, holiday-makers from Stockport, filed a complaint with police last week that Warburton was raped in her hotel room at the southeastern resort of Protaras by a hotel employee.

They later retracted the complaint. Police said they fabricated the story thinking they could claim compensation from an insurance company.

The couple hugged one another as they left the court.

Only two weeks ago, a different judge of the same court imposed a four-month sentence on Irish tourist Annette Mangan, 22, for filing a complaint that she was gang-raped by three Irishmen. . . . She retracted the statement under interrogation.

Mr. Mangan, a computer factory worker from Dublin, is now serving her sentence at a prison in Nicosia.

Her Cypriot lawyers have filed a request for a remission of her sentence, seeking clemency from the Cyprus attorney-general.

Should the request be granted, the attorney-general would recommend to Cypriot President Glafcos Clerides that Mangan be pardoned.

"We are confident we will have an answer by the end of this week," one of Mangan's lawyers said.

The Famagusta district court, which has the southeastern resort town of Ayia Napa in its jurisdiction, is usually swamped with cases during the summer months involving tourists charged with making false claims.

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PALESTINIANS DON'T THINK KINDLY OF BIBI: Palestinian protesters hold pro-Arafat and anti-Israel banners, during a demonstration held in Gaza City Monday, some banners declared Netanyahu is Hitler (see story on page 1) (AFP photo)

TOKYO (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu ran into criticism from Japanese officials Monday for his three-week-old closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

But, Mr. Netanyahu, in Tokyo seeking greater Japanese investment, gave no indication of when the ban might be lifted, saying Palestinian President Yasser Arafat had not done enough yet on security cooperation.

Netanyahu said.

Asked if Israeli actions since he took office last year were behind an unravelling of the peace process, Mr. Netanyahu said it was Mr. Arafat's side that had not kept its pledges under the Oslo accord on Palestinian autonomy.

"[The Palestinians] did not jail the terrorists — in fact, I saw the other day that Arafat embraced them, even kissed them," Mr. Netanyahu said.

Japanese may build car plant at Israeli-PNA industrial park

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The Japanese are negotiating with Israel and the Palestinians to set up a vehicle assembly plant in an industrial area near Gaza that would employ 500 Palestinians, an Israeli businessman said Monday.

During a visit this week to Israel, Japanese Minister Hashimoto that expanded economic relations must not depend on the peace process, the Haaretz newspaper reported.

The peace process has ground to a halt since Mr. Netanyahu was elected in May last year. The Palestinians pulled out negotiations in March when

Bank and Gaza, barring thousands of Palestinians from jobs in Israel four weeks ago.

"Explained that this policy is connected solely to the issue of security," Mr. Netanyahu told Israeli army radio in remarks broadcast from Tokyo.

"If there is cooperation with the Palestinians on... fighting terrorism — including passing on information [to Israel] from interrogations when they finally arrest and question people — this will make it easier for us to lift the closure," he said.

Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto raised the issue with Mr. Netanyahu in a two-hour meeting that Japanese officials said was conducted in a "friendly but candid atmosphere."

The officials said Mr. Hashimoto emphasised the importance for Israel in taking positive initiatives for peace in the Middle East so Arabs could end their "pessimism."

Mr. Netanyahu told Israeli army radio that although Japan had reservations, "it has not linked Israeli-Japanese economic ties or their development to our closure policy."

Mr. Netanyahu came in for further sharp questioning on Israel's policies at a news conference, where he put all the blame for the breakdown of the Middle East peace process on Mr. Arafat.

Recent bombing attacks were the result of "the failure of the Palestinian authorities and of Arafat to keep the pledge he gave to my predecessor, Rabin," Mr.

Israel, which is keeping its Oslo accord commitments, is accused of violating them, the Palestinians, who violate the accords, are praised for keeping them."

Accompanied by Finance Minister Yacov Neeman and a big delegation of Israeli business leaders, Mr. Netanyahu is spending three days in Japan before travelling to South Korea Wednesday on a similar mission. He returns home Thursday.

Heavily dependent on Arab oil, Japan and South Korea have always walked a delicate diplomatic line in business ties with Israel.

Mr. Netanyahu's mission to Japan and South Korea is to keep the economic ties moving particularly given the latest turmoil.

He called on Japan to overcome "fashionable gloom" about Israel and explore investing in his country.

"I'm an inside trader in the peace department," Mr. Netanyahu told the news conference, a refrain he also used in meetings with Japanese business leaders.

He touted the scientific prowess of his nation, which he said had become one of "the pre-eminent technological powers in the world" through spin-offs from military research and an influx of educated immigrants from Russia.

Mr. Netanyahu said he gave Mr. Hashimoto a joint Israeli-Jordan request for Japan's help in a major water purification project, because solving water disputes was a key to easing tensions between Israel and its neighbours.

Benjamin Netanyahu is trying to persuade Tokyo to give companies the green light to invest in Israel despite the faltering peace process with the Palestinians.

The car factory at the Erez industrial area on the Gaza border with Israel has received the okay from both the Palestinians and Israelis but not yet from the Japanese, said Kobi Cohen, the chairman of Erez entrepreneurs.

"The Japanese are looking very positively at this. If they do bring it here, it would help in a big way," Mr. Cohen told Agence France Presse. "We really need these deals to help improve the ties between us and help Palestinian families."

The three sides have held talks on the project for about six months, he added.

The 41,000 square metre factory would be part of a larger complex planned to expand the zone to employ 120,000 workers when completed by 2000. The Israeli-controlled industrial zone now employs about 3,500 Palestinians.

But Israeli media reported Monday that Japanese officials had told Mr. Netanyahu that investment in such projects as part of improved economic ties between Israel and Japan would depend on progress in the peace process.

Japan is one of the main donors to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) led by Yasser Arafat.

Accompanied by 24 business people on his four-day visit to Japan which began Sunday, Mr. Netanyahu hoped to persuade Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro

Israeli began work on a new Jewish settlement in the east Jerusalem.

The prime minister sought to convince the Japanese government not to hamper Israeli-Japanese business ties, the Haaretz reported.

"There is a certain dynamic and therefore I'm not certain the government of Japan is able, even if it would like to, to arrest the momentum," Mr. Netanyahu told Haaretz Sunday. "There is no doubt the Japanese are very cautious about stability in the Middle East," Mr. Netanyahu told the newspaper.

Israeli exports to Japan fell last year by 8.9 per cent, although that was partially due to the devaluation of the yen against the dollar and consequential rise in the cost of Israeli products in Japan.

When the peace process was going strong under the former Labour government in 1995, Israeli exports to Japan rose by 55 per cent.

Haaretz reported that the Japanese had tried to convince Mr. Netanyahu to postpone his visit due to the rising tensions in the peace process but that the Israeli leader insisted the trip go ahead as planned.

Mr. Netanyahu got his way, but the visit remains unofficial.

Israel has been critical of Japan, which depends on the Middle East for its oil supplies, for having quietly gone along with an Arab-led boycott of Israeli products prior to the first Israel-Palestinian peace accord in 1993.

Mr. Netanyahu is also scheduled to visit South Korea and Azerbaijan before heading home on Friday.

TOKYO (AFP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Monday the world economy risked being "taken hostage" if Iran acquired advanced missile technology.

"If Iran acquires ballistic missiles that could reach thousands of kilometres, not only Israel would be in danger, but many many other countries in the world," Mr. Netanyahu told a news conference.

"Many interests, including your own would be jeopardised," he told the National Press Club of Japan on the second day of a four-day official visit.

The Israeli prime minister warned that if Iran acquired advanced missile technology "the whole world economy could be taken hostage."

"So it is in the interest of Israel, for Russia, for Japan, for every country, to prevent this from taking place," he said.

Mr. Netanyahu said had raised the issue of "the flow of Russian missile technology to Iran" in talks with President Boris Yeltsin.

He played down reports that relations between Israel and Russia had reached crisis point over Russian military aid to help Iran develop long-range missiles.

"I wouldn't describe it as a crisis situation at all," he said, adding, "relations are getting better in all aspects."

But Mr. Netanyahu said that as a consequence of missile technology transfer, "the flow of oil [from Russia] would be jeopardised."

Israel television reported that Mr. Netanyahu sent Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov a strongly-worded message on Thursday protesting at Russia's cooperation with Iran, and called a meeting of his inner security cabinet to discuss the issue.

A report in the Israeli Maariv newspaper last month said Iran is in the final stages of developing a missile with a range of 1,100 kilometres, and that it has started research into a missile with a range of 2,000 kilometres.

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Michael Jackson charity finances probed in Britain

LONDON (AFP) — An inquiry has been opened into the financial affairs of the British branch of the charity set up by U.S. pop singer Michael Jackson, the British charities authority said Monday. The Charity Commission said it was studying the accounts of Heal the World, set up in 1992, after discovering that a "significant" proportion of its British funds went on administrative costs. In June, Britain's Channel 5 television said that the body, devoted to children and the environment, had made no donations during the last three years and registered a deficit in 1995.

No room on the runway for basketball star Shaquille O'Neal

HONG KONG (AFP) — He may be a giant for basketball fans around the world, but for Hong Kong's airport authorities, he's just small fry. L.A. Lakers star Shaquille O'Neal had to resort to unconventional means for getting to Hong Kong after the airport said its landing schedule was filled with international jetliners and no room could be made for his twin-engine executive plane. O'Neal landed instead at the new and under-used airport at Macau, on the other side of the Pearl River Delta, and had to take a one-hour jetfoil to get to Hong Kong.

Crocodile electrocuted biting off more than he can chew

ZURICH (AFP) — A pet crocodile died when he tried to chomp through the electric heating system of his enclosure in his owner's Zurich apartment, police here said Monday. The 17-year-old croc, which was brought back from Papua New Guinea and which measured more than a metre, was electrocuted Saturday. His owner carried him to the local police station and asked for him to be put into cold storage. The crocodile will be stuffed and exhibited in a museum.

Mystery trio parachute from medieval Italian tower

SIENNA (AFP) — A mysterious trio parachuted from the top of the medieval tower in the main square of Sienna, central Italy, before disappearing into the crowd of bemused tourists, the police said Sunday. The two men and a woman posed as regular tourists to go up the Del Mangia tower on Sunday. But once at the top, they unpacked parachutes hidden in rucksacks, and one after the other leapt from the parapet. On landing in the square below — scene of the famous annual horse race "Il Palio" — they folded their chutes and melted away.

Conservative party leader tries to shake off austere image

LONDON (AFP) — Conservative Party leader William Hague joined thousands of revelers at London's Carnival on Monday. The two-day Afro-Caribbean festival, Europe's largest street festival, transformed the west of the city into a rainbow of colour as more than 120 floats paraded through the streets. Since becoming Conservative Party leader this summer, Hague, who is 36, has been trying to shake off an austere image and appear more relaxed. The opposition leader turned up at the carnival without a tie and jacket and with shirt sleeves rolled up. His fiancée wore Bermuda shorts.

[illegible]